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THE LIFE OF
GENERAL LORD RAWLINSON OF TRENT
G.C.B., G.C.V.O., G.C.S.I., K.C.M.G.

GENERAL LORD RAWLINSON OF TRENT

From the painting by Oswald Birley.

Soldier, Artist, Sportsman

The Life of General Lord Rawlinson of Trent

G.C.B., G.C.V.O., G.C.S.I., K.C.M.G.

FROM HIS JOURNALS AND LETTERS

EDITED BY

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PREFACE

THE publication of journals has recently been the subject of considerable and, in the main, reasonable criticism. Such records usually contain accounts of conversations and discussions of which the other party to the talk may have an entirely different version. In the case of those who have passed away, a journal, regularly written up, almost certainly presents a number of first impressions, which the writer would have revised before publication had he lived.

These considerations were in my mind when I was invited to write the life of Lord Rawlinson. On examining the available material, I found it to consist in the main of some sixty-odd volumes of journal, covering the whole period of his career in the army. There are, in addition, a considerable number of bound volumes of his more important correspondence. Lord Rawlinson inherited from his father the faculty of observation, a taste for recording observation, and the habit of method. Begun in his youth, primarily to let his family know what he was doing, the journal was continued in his middle years mainly for professional purposes. In his accounts of each of the five campaigns in which he took part, Rawlinson paused at intervals to sum up what he held to be the military lessons of his experiences. He kept careful records of the enemy's doings, of the country, of marches, supplies, and losses. On each of his many trips to foreign parts he interspersed his stories of men and cities with notes upon the military characteristics of the countries which he visited, and of their troops, making comparisons between our methods and theirs. As he grew in years, and the historical importance of the events, with which he was concerned, increased, he

formed the intention of one day writing an autobiography. Deeply impressed by the responsibilities which devolve upon a commander of men in war, and comparing the views which he had held as a young officer with those which he held after commanding a great army in a tremendous conflict, he wished to put on record his experiences for the benefit of those who might come after him. The journals of his later years became, then, more expansive, and were written at least with the idea of providing material for publication.

Lord Rawlinson was the first to pass away of those British officers who held important commands in the field throughout the Great War, and much of this book is naturally concerned with the Great War. It is historically important to know what a commander was thinking at the time when he made his decisions, and a journal written up by one such, almost from day to day, has a special value. The younger generation to-day, with a cheery confidence in itself, which I have no wish to diminish, but also with a somewhat light-hearted tendency to judge in the light of after knowledge, which might with advantage be checked, is disposed to be critical of the "old buffers" who commanded in the Great War. It seems to me, then, highly desirable that it should have a firmer basis for its criticism than as yet exists, and should know how at least one of the commanders in the Great War trained himself for his task, and how and why he acted as he did in that war.

On the grounds, then, that Lord Rawlinson's journals show us in his own words the development of his mind, and the reasons for his actions at the time of action, better than I could show forth these things in my words, I determined to take the responsibility of making the journals the basis of the story of his life. In doing this I have occasionally amalgamated with the journal letters written at the same time and about the same events, where they appear to me to provide a fuller or more graphic description, and I have

made such verbal corrections as any author would make in preparing manuscript for publication. I have also sometimes run together two or three letters dealing with the same subject. In other respects the story is presented as he told it, though for the selection of the material I am responsible.

In his early life Lord Rawlinson was brought into close touch with both Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener; Sir Henry Wilson was his closest military friend. He has much of interest to tell us of all three. The British soldier usually sees much of the world, but Lord Rawlinson saw more of it than most soldiers. His travels and campaigns took him to India, Burma, Egypt, the Sudan, South Africa, North Africa, the Mediterranean, Canada, the United States, Russia, China, and Malaya. In the course of the Great War he commanded British, Australian, Canadian, New Zealand, South African, French, Serbian, and Russian troops. It is, I think, unique that one who led a life of quite abnormal physical activity, and as a soldier and sportsman saw so much of the world and its peoples, should have left so complete and graphic a record of his experiences.

Upon the problems of the Great War, Rawlinson has naturally much light to throw. Who was right, the Easterner or the Westerner? What was the prime cause of the failure of the Dardanelles campaign? Was the first battle of the Somme a costly mistake? Should we, or should we not, have used tanks in that battle? Could we have won the war in 1917? What is the true story of the formation of the Executive War Board in 1918? Would the formation of that Board have saved us from the disasters of March of that year? To the answers to these questions the reader will find that Lord Rawlinson has new and interesting contributions to make. The story of the triumphant campaign of Lord Rawlinson's Fourth Army from August 8 to November 11, 1918, has been told in detail in "The Story of the Fourth Army," by his devoted friend and staff officer, Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Montgomery

Massingberd, to whose assistance in the compilation of this book I owe much. I have therefore confined myself to giving Lord Rawlinson's own views of those momentous days. Nor have I thought it necessary to provide complete maps, as these are available for the student elsewhere.

The chapters dealing with his tenure of the Command-in-Chief in India are concerned with questions which the departure for India of the Commission to investigate the problems of the government of that country makes very actual. They show clearly how inextricably the question of India's political development is involved in the question of India's defence.

The method which I have adopted has a disadvantage. While it illustrates the development of the man's mind—and I shall have failed lamentably if I have not succeeded in showing that his mind developed in time to enable it to cope with ever-increasing responsibility—while it discloses his real opinions, thoughts, and tastes, it shows but indirectly the opinions of others of himself and of his work. Of these, then, a few words from me are needed before I introduce him to the reader.

The general opinion of Lord Rawlinson during the greater part of his army career, amongst those who did not know him intimately, was that he was a lucky man, the implication being that fortune and interest had as much to do with his advancement as had merit. He would have been the last to deny his good fortune. He was fortunate in a father of exceptional distinction. Through that father he was brought as a young man in touch with Lord Roberts; still a young man, he made the acquaintance and gained the confidence of Lord Kitchener. Neither of those great soldiers would have advanced his career as they did, had he not proved to them that he possessed qualities to make him worthy of their interest. Writing of her father and his staff at Army Head-quarters in India in the 'nineties, Countess Roberts says: "Of his staff Rawly was one of the inner

friends to whom he always turned. His keenness, his unfailing good humour, and his capacity of throwing himself whole-heartedly into everything he did, were all qualities that attached my father to him in his early days, and made him enjoy his companionship. As time went on, and he showed that he was going to take his profession seriously, my father followed his career with interest and helped him whenever he could." The opinion which Lord Kitchener held of Rawlinson is made sufficiently clear in these pages.

Ambitious, Rawlinson certainly was, but his ambition broadened from the eagerness of a young man for personal distinction into desire to use his powers in the best way for the best service of the State. His early keenness and ambition were the more noticed because they were less common in the army in the years which preceded the South African War than they are to-day. Just after he had passed through the Staff College, he and his friend Henry Wilson were both attached to a mounted infantry company at Aldershot, and a story of the two, entirely apocryphal, went round the station. News, said gossip, arrived of a vacancy at the War Office. The two took the first train to town, and Wilson got the appointment because he travelled on the engine!

Rawlinson had greater temptations than most young men who entered the army in the mid-Victorian era, to devote himself to that kind of pleasure for which the army of those days offered ample opportunity. A keen sportsman, a fine horseman, and a good shot, he came early into a title, and had more than the average means of a young officer. High-spirited, full of the joy of life, and enjoying every minute of the sport and pleasure which India offered more freely to the young Englishman than she does to-day, he deliberately gave those things the second place and put his profession first. On his way home from the South African War he was able to write with a clear conscience: "I have been very lucky, but I think I can honestly say I have done

my best to deserve my luck." Combining an exceptionally quick mind with an inexhaustible fund of physical energy, he was ever ready for sport, and his achievements in that field were much in evidence. None but his most intimate friends knew of the amount of time he gave to study and thought. Under the influence of Lord Kitchener he early adopted the habit of reserve in professional affairs, and had the reputation with many of being hard and cold, of putting his own advancement first. He deliberately adopted this method as one which seemed to him calculated to get the most work out of others, but I hope to have shown what was behind this veneer. It was a misfortune for his reputation with some of his contemporaries, as well as for the State, that he died as a comparatively young man, in the fullness of his powers, for later achievement had not had time to outweigh fully early impressions.[1]

As a commander in the Great War, Rawlinson had few opportunities to give proof of ability as a strategist; but the reader will find, and be able to judge of, his opinions on the major military problems which the great struggle presented. It was as a tactician and leader of men that his powers were displayed. In the stress of great events he threw off the reserve which he had assumed, he breathed encouragement and inspired confidence. Quite early in the war, at the beginning of the first battle of Ypres, he was able to show that he would not allow ambition to interfere with duty, for in his first command of an army corps he had the courage to disobey the orders of his commander-in-chief, and thereby saved certainly his own command, and probably the British Army, from disaster.

Coming home from the stress of that battle to bring out to France the 8th Division, he found an anxious and depressed country. Lieutenant-General Sir Hastings Anderson, who was then on the staff of the division, writes: "The long faces

[1] At the time of his death Lord Rawlinson was chosen to succeed Lord Cavan as Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

and gloomy lectures of some of the corps staff were little short of criminal, but the buoyant optimism and cheery confidence of the corps commander instilled itself into the officers of the division in spite of them. His appreciation of the seriousness of the situation was certainly no less sure than theirs; but there can be little doubt which was the better part to play with the leaders of troops who were shortly to share the dangers of the first seven divisions."

Of Rawlinson's leadership of an army I may quote the opinion of two of his corps commanders, Generals Sir Alexander Godley and Sir Walter Braithwaite. Both agree that his conferences before a battle were an education. There was a clarity of plan and purpose which no one could misunderstand. No pains were too great to settle details, no practical suggestion for improvement was ignored. The plan settled and prepared, as far as human ingenuity could prepare, there was from the army commander a constant encouragement and readiness to help in execution, and no bickering when achievement belied anticipation, if the executant had done his best.

Of his relations with his more junior leaders, let Brigadier-General John Campbell, V.C., who commanded the 137th Infantry Brigade of the 46th Division, which stormed its way across the St. Quentin Canal, speak:—"My brigade," he writes, "was detailed to attack and take the Canal du Nord at Bellenglise on September 29, 1918. Just before the attack was to take place, Lord Rawlinson came to my head-quarters, and, after inquiring about our final preparations, he examined my plan of attack and discussed it very fully with me. Before he left he gave us his opinion that all was in order, and that we should succeed in our venture. Any doubts we might have had of the issue were dissipated. He left us with 'our tails right up,' and gave us just that start which nothing could stop. Some weeks afterwards the General sent for me, and when I went into his room he greeted me: 'The last time I saw you was

just before Bellenglise, and I don't mind saying now that I never expected to see you again.'"

Rawlinson knew that in war, faith in a plan is the first condition of success. A master of tactical detail, he never failed to discover the weak points in a plan of attack while it was in preparation. The plan made, he never interfered in details, because he knew that last-minute changes breed uncertainty and lack of confidence. These were the reasons why his army trusted him and why it achieved what it did.

As a subordinate, he had, as I have said, the courage to disobey an order from his chief, when it seemed to him that the conditions which the order envisaged had changed materially. He had also the faculty of carrying out a plan with the details of which he was not in entire agreement, as wholeheartedly and enthusiastically as if it were his own. When events proved him to have been right, no one ever heard from his lips that "I told you so" which it is so hard to keep back, particularly in times of strain. No one appreciated this more than his Chief, Lord Haig, who wrote, on hearing of his death: "I have lost a tried and very true friend, and the country has lost a great man."

Of all the tasks in his life, that in India was perhaps the hardest. To provide for the defence of that country with a depleted treasury and a nebulous political situation, required vision, tact, and judgment in a high degree. The financiers were naturally disposed to regard the soldier as their chief enemy; most of the Indian politicians were not disposed to be friendly to a British administrator. Rawlinson had two courses open to him. He could have played the plain soldier, have stated the military requirements of India, and left to others the responsibility of rejecting his advice. Most of his soldier friends urged upon him that course. Many of them expressed their disagreement with him when he did not adopt it. He rejected that course deliberately, because he felt that it would produce an impasse which would be good neither for India in particular

nor for the Empire in general. He set himself instead to co-operate with the statesmen of India, as far as his functions allowed, in the solution of their political problems. In the event, he convinced the financiers that he was ready to help them up to the very limit of his responsibilities; he convinced the Indian politicians that he had the real interests of India at heart. The Viceroys with whom he was concerned, and more particularly Lord Reading, with whom he was most associated, learned to lean upon his judgment. At the end of his time the members of the Legislative Assembly used to rise in a body when he entered their hall, a compliment which they paid to no other Englishman. On his death the great religious communities of India, Hindu, Mohammedan, and Parsee, all held commemoration services—a rare tribute. It was the general opinion of experts that he had greatly advanced the efficiency and improved the organization of the army in India, and had left that country in a better state of security than he had found it. At the same time he had promoted real economies and played a great part in removing some, at least, of that bitterness with which Indian had regarded Briton, when he landed at Bombay to take command of the army in India.

Lord Reading, the colleague in the Government of India, with whom he was in closest touch, writes of him: "He and I were closely associated from my arrival in India until his deeply-lamented death, he was a highly-esteemed colleague in my council, a most loyal comrade, using every effort to help government to serve the true interests of India and the Empire. He was a shrewd and wise counsellor in regard to the military affairs of India, and a keen and bold debater in the Legislature, never hesitating to speak frankly as the constitutional adviser of the Government on military matters. He had a high conception of his duty, and gave his views without consideration of their effect on his own popularity. Yet, notwithstanding that,

on occasions, he expressed opinions in conflict with those of the Legislature, he was held by them in high esteem and respect. I was always interested to note the rapidity of his appreciation of a new situation, and the facility with which he adapted his ideas to it. He was deeply interested in the political development of India, which he surveyed with a wide and liberal range of vision, tempered by prudence. Above all, I recall him as a friend with whom my relations were intimate—a rare luxury in the solitary life of a Viceroy! I became very attached to him, and loved his boyish and sporting spirit—for he was as keen at games as at work, and played them with the same intensity of purpose and the same determination to win. In friendship he was thoroughly loyal and dependable, and was held in deep affection by those who knew him intimately. He had a winning way, which often enabled him to get things done which had appeared impossible."

Having spent some eighteen months in close association with Lord Rawlinson's mind as portrayed in his journal, I may perhaps be allowed to add my confirmation of Lord Reading's tribute to Lord Rawlinson's loyalty. He was a very loyal friend, a very loyal servant to his chiefs, with one alone of whom, Lord French, did he ever have any serious difference. In the thousands of pages of his journal I have never found an unkind word of anyone. He wrote with malice toward none; and if anything I have here produced gives offence, I pray the reader to believe that the fault must be mine, either of omission or commission—not the fault of the writer.

I have to thank the many friends of Lord Rawlinson who have placed letters at my disposal. I have also to thank Field-Marshal Sir Claud Jacob for kindly reading the Indian chapters, and the proprietors of *Punch* for permission to use the extract from Captain Langley's letter in Chapter VIII.

F. MAURICE.

January, 1928.

INTRODUCTION

THE American no less than the British public will feel a debt of gratitude to General Sir Frederick Maurice for this altogether admirable life of his friend and comrade in peace and war, General Lord Rawlinson. Both author and subject belonged to that remarkable group of men who, part of them in the War Office at London and the others in high commands in the field, stayed up the arms of the Commander-in-Chief of the British armies on the Western Front during the Great War until the sun had set on the day of victory. In the parlance of the time they were known as "Westerners"; men who knew that the final issue of the war must and would be decided in France somewhere west of the Rhine, and that no diversion of military effort should be tolerated except for an evidently favorable reaction on the issue there. More than once this belief brought them into opposition to governmental policies the results of which did but strengthen their conviction of the soundness of their belief. In the firm and consistent maintenance of this attitude none rendered more loyal and efficient service than did General Maurice to his chief, General Robertson, the British C.I.G.S. in London, and General Rawlinson to Sir Douglas Haig, the commander-in-chief in the field.

In the face of the situation which existed in those dark days at the end of 1917, the spirit which animated all of these men is evident on every page of this Life, made up from the letters and diaries of Lord Rawlinson as he wrote them from day to day. It is the spirit of grim determination of dauntless men whose backs were against the wall, of dogged resolution to hold on to the end — a spirit which permeated the rank and file of all the armies and which justified their conviction of ultimate victory. In a letter written after the unsuccessful campaign of 1915 he said, "I am absolutely confident that the Allies will prevail, just as they did one hundred years ago" — a confidence that never weakened.

American readers will have an especial interest in this volume because it was under Rawlinson's command that their troops first participated, in considerable numbers, in major operations

of the war and demonstrated beyond a doubt — if any one still doubted — their capacity for organization into an independent American army. At various times during the Somme offensive he had under his command the 27th, 30th, and 33d American divisions. But already, on July 4, four companies of the 33d Division were in the attack on Hamel, one of the preparatory operations for the final drive. Of this affair Rawlinson writes, "I selected the date of Independence Day, as it was the first occasion on which American troops had taken part in an actual attack with our own fellows." At the last moment before the attack, word was received that these troops had not completed their training and therefore, in accordance with the agreement between the American and British high commands, they were not available for an actual attack. He adds: "It was then too late to withdraw them, so I am afraid I had to disobey the order. All went well and the Americans did not have many casualties; but if things had gone wrong I suppose I should have been sent home in disgrace. The American troops conducted themselves admirably, fought like tigers, and have won the undying admiration and affection of the Australians." If an incident that was related to the writer by General Rawlinson at his headquarters a few days afterwards referred to that affair of July 4, he has very generously taken upon himself a responsibility that was not his own. He said that on a recent occasion (but not specifically saying that it was the 4th of July attack on Hamel) four American companies had been assigned to a part in a night assault. At the last moment he received and transmitted to the British officer commanding the attack an order that the American companies must be withdrawn. This officer was directed to replace them by colonials. He reported that two of the companies were in advance and could not be withdrawn without abandoning the attack; that the other two had been sent back "shedding tears of rage" at missing this longed-for opportunity. After the attack was over, it was learned that sympathetic Australian comrades had proposed to them a temporary exchange of uniforms and that under this guise they after all got into the fight, a fact that was only discovered the next day.

In the operations in the Amiens sector prior to the final advance of Rawlinson's army on August 8, the 33d Division lost 35 killed and 206 wounded. On the Somme offensive, beginning August 8 and up to the 20th of the month, the same divi-

sion lost 109 killed and 977 wounded. From September 24 to October 22, the 27th Division lost 1238 killed and 5582 wounded, while from September 23 to October 22, the 30th Division lost 1096 killed and 6258 wounded.

Besides his words already quoted about the four companies of the 33d Division at Hamel, General Rawlinson often speaks of the gallant services of the Americans, and on frequent visits of the writer to his headquarters he never failed to give them unstinted praise. On September 21 he casually remarks, "The Yanks are in first-class form." September 28, just before breaking the Hindenburg Line, he writes, "I feel pretty happy about the prospects as a whole, for, if the Americans are inexperienced, they are as keen as mustard and splendid men." After the Hindenburg reserve line was broken through, he says, on October 8, "My heaviest losses in this battle have been in the American Corps. They were too keen to get on, as gallant new troops always are." On October 8, "the 30th American Division went in like tigers." On the 20th, after the Battle of the Selle, he writes that Sir Douglas Haig "has sent a nice telegram to Read, congratulating him and his Americans on their achievement. I am glad, for it was well deserved . . . they are just as keen as ever." These and many other words not quoted in this volume will bring back to many an American memory the tall, soldierly figure, the warm hand-clasp, the quiet, earnest speech weighty with the wisdom of long experience and inspiring all who heard with hope and courage, of this man now dead, but who, while he lived, was ever the gallant gentleman and in the truest sense a noble man.

The great lesson to be drawn by the young American from this Life of Lord Rawlinson is that good fortune really comes to no one who is not prepared to profit by it. From his earliest letters, as a young lad to his father, to his last ones when he was commander-in-chief in India -- for he died there where he had begun his service -- it is evident that he had made it the guiding principle of his life, by earnest reflection and by study of each experience of his own and of others, to be prepared for the next that might come to him. It is especially for this reason that General Maurice has done well in letting him tell the story of his own life.

TASKER H. BLISS

Life of General Lord Rawlinson of Trent

G.C.B.

CHAPTER I

THE YOUNG SOLDIER

LORD RAWLINSON'S family derives from north-west Lancashire, where it had been established certainly from the days of Edward IV, perhaps earlier. His great-grandfather, Henry Rawlinson of Grassyard Hall, who was member of Parliament for Liverpool from 1750 to 1784, was the last to live in the County Palatine, for his eldest son Abram was a man of sporting tastes, fond of hunting and of horses, and he, finding the grass-lands of the Midlands more suited to his needs than the hills of Lancashire, sold the property in that county and bought Chadlington in Oxfordshire, a place in the Heythorp country, with which hunt he had distinguished himself as an undergraduate of Christ Church. Abram took an active part in county life and became a deputy-lieutenant of Oxfordshire, but his title to distinction lay in his skill as a breeder and owner of race-horses. In 1841 his Coronation, bred at Chadlington, won the Derby and was second in the St. Leger, a remarkable feat for a country gentleman of comparatively small means.

At Chadlington, Abram's second son, Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, was born on April 11, 1810. Henry went to India as a cadet in the East India Company's service at the age of seventeen, and eventually joined the 1st Bombay Grenadiers. He quickly made a name for himself as a fine horseman and a remarkable linguist. His fame as a horseman spread throughout India when, in 1832, he undertook to ride from Poona to Panwell, a distance of $71\frac{3}{4}$ miles, in under four hours, for a stake of £100. He accomplished

his task in 3 hours 7 minutes, to find the judges, who had not expected him for at least another half hour, still asleep. This performance remained a record which was not seriously challenged until 1889, when Colonel, afterwards General Sir William, Gatacre, rode from Simla to Ambala, a distance of $96\frac{3}{4}$ miles in $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Not many years later, Henry Rawlinson was able to put his horsemanship to more serious use. His knowledge of languages stood him in good stead, for he was chosen on that account to be employed with other British officers to assist in the reorganization of the Persian army, and it was his experience in Persia which determined his career. He was appointed British Resident in Kermanshah, and while there became involved in a serious dispute with the Persian governor. Proceeding to Teheran to report what had occurred, he found that the Shah had started on an expedition towards the frontier of Afghanistan. At the instigation of the British Minister he rode in pursuit of the Shah across Persia, covering 750 miles in 150 consecutive hours, and while on this ride he came across a Russian agent named Vickovitch, who subsequently became famous.[1] Rawlinson discovered that Vickovitch was on his way to Kabul, our first intimation of Russian activity in that country, and he strongly suspected that Russia was behind the Shah's expedition.

That Rawlinson was no alarmist was proved when in 1837 the Persians, encouraged by Russia, besieged Herat, which, thanks to the courage and skill of Edward Pottinger, a young officer in the Company's service, was able to hold out. From this incident may be dated Rawlinson's suspicions of Russian designs in Central Asia, which henceforth he watched closely. His interest in the problem of the defence of India against Russian aggression was rivalled by his interest in the topography, history and antiquities of Persia, and in 1836 he wrote for the Royal Geographical Society a paper on his explorations in the then unknown

[1] The "Dictionary of National Biography" has got this story wrong, in that it makes Rawlinson ride to Teheran to warn the British Minister of Vickovitch's presence. The story is told by Sir Henry himself, in a letter published in the "Memoir of Sir Henry Rawlinson," by his brother, Canon Rawlinson, well known as the translator of Herodotus.

mountains of Luristan, which procured for him the Gold Medal of that body in 1840.

The disturbances which followed the rivalry of Shah Shuja and Dost Mohammed for the throne of Afghanistan, combined with the fears of the Company of irritating Russia, led at the end of 1838 to the withdrawal of the British officers from Persia, and after a short period of regimental duty at Bombay, Rawlinson became assistant to Sir William Macnaghten, the Company's representative at Kabul. This gave him opportunity for studying what was later to become the North-West frontier of India. Fortunately for himself, he was appointed in 1840 political agent for Lower Afghanistan, with his head-quarters at Kandahar, and thus escaped the disasters of the winter 1841–42, in which Macnaghten was assassinated and but one survivor of the British force at Kabul, Dr. William Brydon, reached Jalalabad. Rawlinson had repeatedly warned the Indian authorities of the impending dangers and of the hostility of the Afghans to their protégé Shah Shuja. When the troubles came he was ready for them. He rendered distinguished service in an action which took place outside Kandahar, at the head of his personal escort of Persian horse, and took a notable part in the defence of Kandahar which followed. Finally, when the hesitation of Lord Ellenborough, who had at first ordered evacuation, was at length overcome, he accompanied Sir William Nott, the military commander at Kandahar, in his march from Kandahar to Kabul. There they were just anticipated by General Pollock, who had advanced from Jalalabad. Rawlinson returned with Pollock and Nott to India, and this ended a military career in which he had shown capacity for leadership in the field; his judgment in two important crises had proved correct, when that of his superiors was wrong; and he had acquired a very complete knowledge of the trides of Afghanistan and its borders.

From his first days in Persia, Rawlinson had taken a deep interest in Assyriology. This, which was henceforth to become his chief interest, led him to accept, in 1843, the appointment of political agent of the East India Company in Turkish Arabia, to which was added the post of consul

at Baghdad. There, while watching closely and with judgment Russia's progress in Central Asia, he resumed a work which he had begun in 1833, the transcription and deciphering of the Persian cuneiform inscription of Behistun. This, with infinite patience, he completed in 1846, and his work, when it reached home, at once placed him in the front rank of Assyriologists. It was an achievement which, for its importance to philology, has only been equalled by the deciphering of the Rosetta Stone. The trustees of the British Museum made him a grant of £3000 to enable him to undertake excavations in Mesopotamia, and he added many treasures to the museum.

In 1855 he resigned his consulship and returned home, to be made a K.C.B. and a Crown director of the East India Company. He was returned to the House of Commons as member for Reigate in 1858, and took a very active part in the debates on the transfer of India to the Crown which followed the Mutiny. In that same year he was appointed one of the original members of the Council of India, a position which he resigned to become Minister Plenipotentiary at Teheran, with the rank of major-general. Failing to get what he considered necessary attention to his views upon Russia's advance towards India, he gave up the position of diplomat, to return a few years later to Parliament, where he incessantly advocated an active opposition to Russia's Eastern policy, and devoted such leisure as this left him to contributing many papers on Assyriology and the topography of the East to learned societies.

In 1862 Sir Henry Rawlinson married Louisa, daughter of Mr. Henry Seymour of Knoyle, Wilts., and of Trent, Dorset, a nephew of the 8th Duke of Somerset, and to them was born on February 20, 1864, their eldest son, Henry Seymour. Lady Rawlinson was an amateur artist of some distinction, and she took pains to develop young Henry's taste in that direction, giving him a sense of colour and beauty and a taste for sketching, which were to be amongst his greatest pleasures in life. Sir Henry's new constituency was in Somerset, and a good part of Henry's boyhood was spent at Trent, which is near the border of that county. He showed his affection for the place by choosing it as his

territorial title on being raised to the peerage, and one of his few unrealized ambitions was to be colonel of the Dorset Regiment.

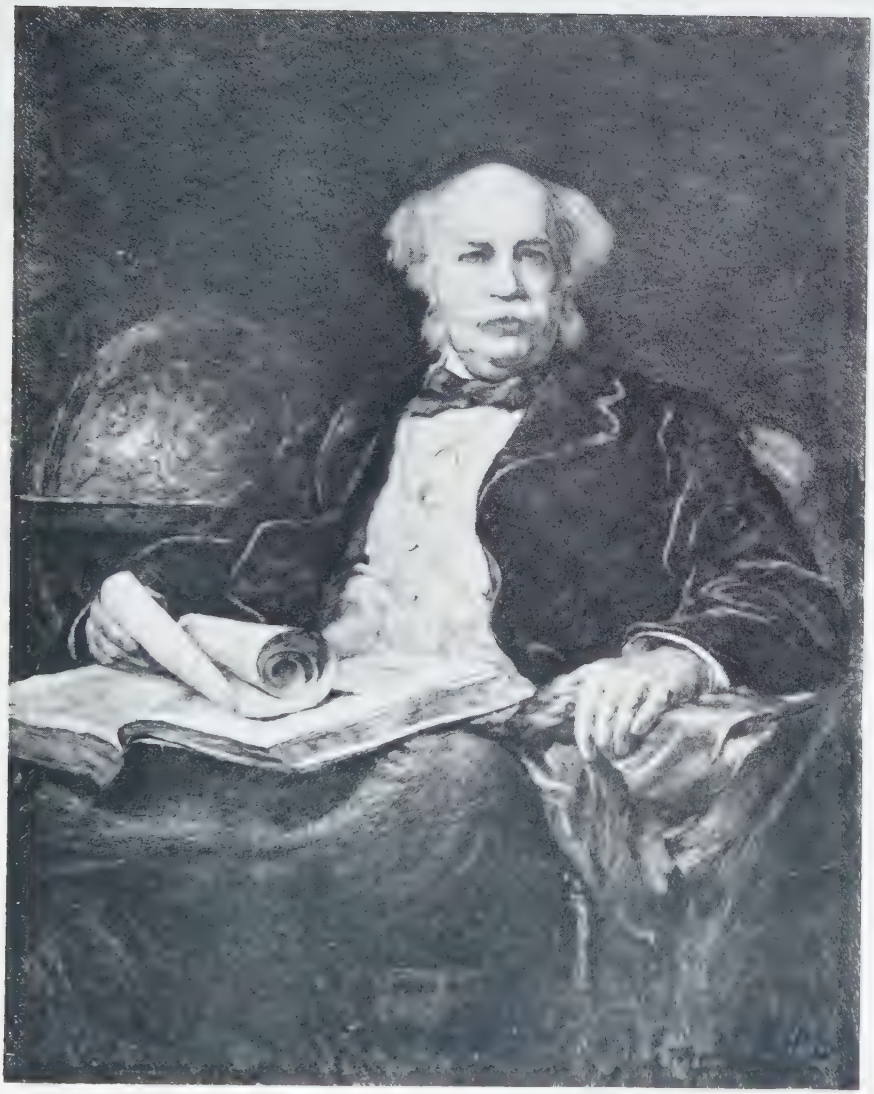
In 1868 Sir Henry Rawlinson resigned his seat in Parliament to be once more a member of the Council in India, and one of his first acts was to write a memorandum on the defence of India from which may be dated the genesis of what has since been called the "Forward Policy," a policy which in later years was to concern his son deeply. In this memorandum[1] Sir Henry traced the history of the advance of Russia in Central Asia, an advance which, as is well known, was subsequently greatly developed. He prophesied that if Russia once obtained a dominant position in Afghanistan "the disquieting effect will be prodigious. With this prospect before us, are we justified in maintaining what has been sarcastically, though perhaps unfairly, called Sir John Lawrence's policy of 'masterly inactivity?' Are we justified in allowing Russia to work her way to Kabul unopposed, and there to establish herself as a friendly power prepared to protect the Afghans against the English?" As a counter to Russia's advance he advocated the establishment of the closest possible relations with Afghanistan, the payment of a subsidy to the Amir, and a vigorous establishment of British influence over the tribes on either side of the roads from India to Kandahar and Kabul. The later development of the controversy which this memorandum aroused will be told in its proper place, but it soon had a result which was to influence greatly the career of Sir Henry's eldest son. The memorandum attracted the attention of Colonel Roberts who, not long after it appeared, received a high appointment on the Quartermaster-General's staff at Army Head-quarters in India. In this position Roberts was actively concerned with the problem of the defence of India. He agreed whole-heartedly with Sir Henry, and the future commander-in-chief in India became the leading military advocate in that country of the "forward policy." The result was to develop acquaintance between the two men into close friendship and mutual respect.

[1] Published by him in 1874 in his "England and Russia in the Near East."

By the time when young Henry was able to take an intelligent interest in life, his father was a public figure. Not only was he a member of the Council in India and a recognized authority on the politics of Central Asia, he was President of the Royal Asiatic Society and of the Royal Geographical Society, a Trustee of the British Museum, and Fellow of the Royal Society. "The Dictionary of National Biography" sums up his position in the world of learning in these terms:—"As a general Assyriologist, as a philologist and as a man of learning he has been surpassed by others. As a discoverer and bold constructive interpreter of an undeciphered language, probably by none." A distinguished foreign philologist wrote of him: "*Rawlinson était un homme d'un génie prime-sautier et, ce qui est encore plus rare, il avait le don de tomber juste.*" This gift of quick accurate judgment, the father, as will be seen, transmitted to the son, who was at pains to develop it. From grandfather and father the boy also inherited a taste for horsemanship and an eye for horse-flesh; from his mother a capacity to appreciate the beautiful, and no little skill with pencil and brush.

The family relations were remarkably happy. When in India the young man never missed a mail home, and his letters, preserved by his mother, disclose a delightfully frank intimacy. Not many months after his arrival in India young Henry wrote to tell his parents that a brother officer was coming home on leave, and added, "I wish you would have him to stay with you. He is a real good chap, but he doesn't get on with his father and doesn't want to go home. This seems inexplicable to me. You are so awfully good to me."

The boy, then, started life in the happiest circumstances and with many advantages. He went to Eton, where he was in the same house with Sir Stanley Maude, the future captor of Baghdad. A high-spirited, healthy boy, good at games and fond of sport, Henry enjoyed Eton thoroughly. Being very quick he had no difficulty in keeping out of trouble in the class-room without any excessive application. When it was decided that he should enter the army through Sandhurst, the father, as some recognition of his



SIR HENRY RAWLINSON, G.C.B., F.R.S., 1ST BARONET

From the Painting by Frank Holl, R.A.

distinguished service in India, obtained a Queen's India Cadetship for the son, which meant that the boy had only to pass a qualifying and medical examination. Young Henry obtained nearly double the necessary qualifying marks, and entered Sandhurst just before his nineteenth birthday.

Sir Henry wished to put his son into the Rifle Brigade, and applied to the Duke of Connaught for a nomination to that regiment. The duke was just about to leave England to take up a command in India, and had transferred his nominations to the Commander-in-Chief. It happened that when Henry had passed through Sandhurst and was, at the beginning of 1884, qualified for a commission, there were some fifteen names ahead of him on the Rifle Brigade list, and no immediate prospect of many vacancies. Rather than wait, Henry applied for and obtained a commission in the rival Rifle regiment, the 60th. He was gazetted on February 20, 1884, and posted to the 4th Battalion, then at Ferozepore. He had hardly sailed when Lord Wolseley, then Adjutant-General, wrote to Sir Henry Rawlinson to say that he had obtained a transfer for his son to the Rifle Brigade, that the orders for his embarkation had been a mistake, and he offered to have him brought home. Sir Henry, wisely as it turned out, decided to leave matters as they were; but if the mistake had not been made, Henry Rawlinson and the man who was to be his most intimate soldier friend, Henry Wilson, would have joined the Rifle Brigade within a few months of each other. When Lord Rawlinson was about to leave England to be Commander-in-Chief in India, the Army Council gave him a dinner, and Sir Henry Wilson began a speech proposing the guest's health in his usual chaffing vein with the words: "The Lord Rawlinson and I joined the army together. I joined the best regiment in the army and he the worst." However, as it turned out, this accidental separation did not keep the two long apart.

Sailing from England in March, young Rawlinson arrived in India just at the beginning of the hot weather. With the valour of ignorance he took the thirty days' leave to which officers were entitled on landing, and started off on a sight-seeing tour with his sketch-book to Jaipur, Udaipur,

Delhi, and Agra. Naturally he was soon bowled over by the heat, and was laid up with fever, having a second attack after he reached Ferozepore. The father, naturally anxious at the idea of the young man beginning his service with bouts of fever during hot weather in the plains, offered to use his influence to get him up to the hills. The answer was, from a youngster, remarkable:

"When I have established my position with the regiment and learned my job, your influence with the swells at the top of the tree will be invaluable, but it would be a great mistake to use it now. In the hot weather we are always short-handed, and young officers are required most. If I were to run away now, it would throw more work on someone else, and probably mean that someone would be recalled from a shooting trip, which he had arranged at great trouble and expense. This wouldn't create a very good impression. I want to stay for two reasons. First, to make a good name with my colonel and my brother officers; secondly, to learn my regimental work thoroughly. The fever is all gone now and I'm really quite fit."

He took to polo like a duck to water. The subaltern joining in India to-day will learn with envy that he engaged an excellent bearer at 12 rupees a month, and bought three polo ponies, one of which he claimed to be the best in the station, at a total cost of 850 rupees.[1] His careful stable accounts which he sent home show that the cost of keeping the three was 50 rupees a month. Times have changed, and values with them. We may perhaps discount the enthusiasm of a subaltern for his first purchases, but the fact remains that he was playing for his battalion with credit on his three ponies in his first cold weather.

The 4th Battalion of the 60th had been for some time under orders to move in the winter from Ferozepore to Peshawar. The march began in December, 1884, amidst considerable excitement and anticipation. In March of that year the Russians had occupied Merv. The diplomatic negotiations which followed this move resulted in the appointment of an Anglo-Russian Commission to delimit the northern frontier of Afghanistan. Sir Peter Lumsden

[1] About £65.

was appointed to lead the British Commission, and had begun work when the Russian Government announced that it preferred to continue the negotiations in London instead of on the actual frontier. Sir Peter and his officers discovered ample evidence of Russian activity on the borders of Afghanistan, their reports aroused great uneasiness in London and in India, and the Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Donald Stewart, was ordered to prepare quietly for war. He began to mobilize two army corps on the Indian frontier. The 60th at Peshawar would form part of one of these army corps and the preparations were naturally the chief subject of talk in the mess. "Rumours of war arrive every other day, and are contradicted the next," wrote Rawlinson to his father. "Something or other seems bound to happen soon. If it is, I couldn't be better placed. Here I am right on the frontier in the best battalion in India. I have already made some name for myself for my sketching and that should help me to get out of the ruck. I have been reading your articles on the Indian frontier, and I think I understand more about it than most of the fellows here. Anyway, I mean to have a jolly good try to keep up the reputation which the name Rawlinson has in India."

The friction on the northern frontier of Afghanistan culminated, on March 30, 1885, in a collision between Russians and Afghans at Panjdeh in which the Afghans were badly worsted. The Panjdeh incident aroused great excitement at home. The attack had followed immediately on an agreement, announced by Mr. Gladstone on March 13 in the House of Commons, that no advance should be made either by Russian or by Afghan forces to points within the debatable ground. Further, the Government at home had advised the Afghans to resist if the Russians did so advance.[1] On April 27, Mr. Gladstone, in a warlike speech, asked for and obtained a credit for warlike preparations. The incident was eventually closed by the Tsar offering to refer the dispute to arbitration, an offer which resulted in Mr. Gladstone agreeing to the reinstitution of the boundary commission. He was, no doubt, influenced by the fact that we were at the time involved in the Sudan—Khartoum

[1] Lord Granville to Sir Peter Lumsden—March 3, 1895.

having fallen not very long before—and still more by the reports from his military advisers that we were in no condition to undertake war with Russia.

The excitement during these days in the British garrisons on the frontier of India was naturally intense, and from then may be dated the dawn of ambition in the young subaltern of the 60th, and the determination to take his profession seriously.

During the discussions which had arisen out of the friction between England and Russia, it had been arranged that a meeting should take place between the Amir Abdul Rahman and the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. The meeting took place at Rawal Pindi, and was actually in progress when the Panjdeh incident occurred. The settlement of that affair was no doubt facilitated by the fact that the Amir, while professing the greatest friendliness to us, did not take the loss of Panjdeh seriously. The assembly of troops on the frontier made it easy to arrange an impressive display in his honour, and a great review of some 18,000 troops was held. This gave young Rawlinson his first sight of Indian splendour.

"The Amir is gone at last, thank goodness. He was never less than an hour late for any ceremony, and sometimes kept us waiting three and even four hours, so the men were kept a considerable time under arms. However, the review and the Durbar were splendid sights. The Viceroy's fifty elephants were all turned out in gorgeous trappings, and the Rajahs in their best togs and jewels were a wonderful show. One of them, Patiala, had a silver carriage drawn by six milk-white steeds covered with red morocco and gold harness. I could have lived comfortably on one wheel, and should not have refused a spoke, if he had offered it to me. At the review the cavalry charged past like a wall at full gallop, and I felt I would rather be behind than in front of them. I fancy old Abdul felt the same. He has gone home with lots of presents and a pretty big subsidy, which I think is what you wanted. Apparently there is to be no war, and they have granted special leave subject to 72 hours' recall. The alarms have shaken us all up, and I am going to study the frontier all I can."

A few weeks later he was able to give a practical touch to this study. He had made friends with the political officer of the Khyber and persuaded him to take him up the pass, then not quite so simple a trip as it is now. He was naturally impressed by the rugged grandeur of the pass, and filled his sketch-book with drawings. He was still more impressed by his first sight of the tribesman in his native hills.

"We were met at the mouth of the pass," he wrote home, "by a lot of dirty-looking ruffians, bristling all over with guns and knives. I thought they were waiting to cut our throats, but they only wanted to salaam to the political officer. It was the same all the way up the pass. I never saw a man who hadn't a gun and many of them had quite good rifles. I now understand, as I never did before, what you mean. If we are going to have to fight in Afghanistan, we must have these fellows on our side, or they will play Old Harry with our communications. I was very disappointed with my first sight of Ali Musjid, of which I had heard such a lot. I can't think why they put the fort where it is. It is commanded easily by hills on both sides, and consists merely of a few feet of wall built round the top of a rock. The whole of the ground inside the wall is perfectly open, and I think it would be quite easy to take the place." [1]

The hot weather in Peshawar, varied with occasional trips to the hills, passed without incident, but at the beginning of the cold weather he was surprised and delighted to receive a letter from Sir Frederick Roberts, who had recently become Commander-in-Chief in India, asking him to come as extra A.D.C. for a big camp of exercise to be held near Delhi in the winter of 1885–86. The mobilization of the previous year had disclosed a good many defects in the organization of the army, and the Commander-in-Chief had determined to test it further by assembling two army corps for exercises and manœuvres. The experience of witnessing manœuvres on a scale then undreamed of at home, as he put it, "from a front seat," was invaluable to the young soldier, who had the further advantage of making the acquaintance of most people of importance in the military

[1] Ali Musjid was captured by the tribesmen in 1897.

world of India. He did his job well, and added to his laurels by being a member of the Commander-in-Chief's team which won the polo tournament held at the end of the manœuvres.

It was Lord Roberts's practice to select young men of promise, to test them thoroughly, and when they made good to attach them to himself and further their advancement. He had tested young Rawlinson at manœuvres, and now proposed to try him again at Army Head-quarters. Therefore, in April he invited him to come up to Simla to act as A.D.C. during the hot weather. These were the days of Kipling's "Plain Tales from the Hills," when the gaieties of Simla were even more renowned than they are to-day. Soon after his arrival at head-quarters, Henry began to moralize on the effect of this life upon his character.

"I am awfully happy here," he wrote; "the Chief is as kind as he can be, and Lady Roberts treats us all as if we were her many sons. Still, it is a curious existence. About twenty-five per cent. of the people up here are up for work and the rest for play, and the latter are only too eager to be nice to anyone who is in with the 'nobs.' So, you see, being A.D.C. to the Commander-in-Chief, makes me a great swell and everybody makes much of me. I hope to goodness this life won't spoil me. I have to remember that in a few months' time I shall be back at regimental duty, and a nobody, and I should hate to go back thinking too much of myself. However, I have lots of good friends and I am sure they will tell me if there are any signs of that disease."

Apparently he succeeded in returning to Peshawar in August without a swollen head, and with the best of characters from Sir Frederick Roberts, for not long afterwards he received a letter asking him to join the Commander-in-Chief's personal staff permanently at the end of the following November. As it turned out, events somewhat expedited the appointment. The capture of Mandalay, and the dispersal of the Burmese army in 1885 by Sir Henry Prendergast, had resulted in the cessation of all organized resistance, but the remnants of the Burmese soldiery had fled to the hills, where they were reinforced by bands of

dacoits and conducted a troublesome guerrilla warfare in dense jungle country. The business of hunting down these robber bands proving to be protracted and expensive, the Viceroy requested Sir Frederick Roberts, in the autumn of 1886, to go himself to Burma to endeavour to put an end to a business of which the Government of India was becoming weary. So it came about that Rawlinson, to his delight, received at Peshawar at the end of October, 1886, orders to join the Commander-in-Chief's staff as A.D.C., and to go with him to Burma. The third week in November found him established in a little summer-house in the gardens of the palace of Mandalay, which was Sir Frederick Roberts's head-quarters.

For a month he was kept busy acting as secretary to the Chief, but towards the end of the year he saw a chance of more active employment, which he jumped at. Sir Frederick Roberts went off on a visit of inspection to Bhamo, and as he would be away for some weeks and did not require Rawlinson, the latter obtained leave to go over and join General Low's[1] column which was endeavouring to clear the southern Chin hills and capture a famous Bo named Shewé. He went down the Irrawaddy by boat to Minbu, and thence rode through the jungle to join Low, whose camp he reached at 11 p.m., after a ride on the last day of seventy miles.

One of Sir F. Roberts's first acts in Burma had been to raise a force of mounted infantry for the more speedy hunting of dacoits. The mounted infantry of Low's brigade was commanded by Captain Golightly, who had been adjutant of Rawlinson's battalion when he joined, and this was the reason for his seeking to join Low's force. As soon as he got into camp he learned that Golightly and the M.I. were to start at 5 a.m. the next morning in pursuit of some dacoits, of whom they had news, and he at once asked for and got leave to join them. The remainder of the story of his first skirmish he shall tell himself:

"*December 17.*—We marched off in the dark at 5.20 a.m., crossed the river and turned up a hill to the right. Perfect silence was kept by everyone. After topping a rise of some

[1] Afterwards General Sir Robert Low.

400 feet through bamboo jungle we came to a clearing, and saw signs of dacoits having recently crossed it. So Golightly and I, followed by the M.I., galloped on, and on reaching the next ridge we saw just below us two dacoits with a pony—a sentry post, I suppose. They turned and raised their guns, but on seeing our strength bolted into the jungle. Before you could say knife, Golightly and I each had two shots at them with our revolvers, but they were too far off for revolver practice, so off got the men. After they had been shooting for less than a minute, the two dacoits disappeared into the jungle. We ran after them and soon came upon one simply riddled with bullets. Pretty good shooting by the Rifle Brigade, whose M.I. were with us. The other man we found just at the corner of a nullah a little farther on.

"Our path then lay through very thick jungle composed of bamboos and low birch, and, forcing our way through this, we came on the Bo's camp, which had evidently been left in a great hurry, as there were heaps of things lying about. Leaving this, we came to a very steep bit of hill indeed, which we could only get up by dismounting and hanging on to our ponies' tails. The little Burmese ponies are wonderful climbers and didn't need any urging, but some of the men were pretty pumped when they got to the top, and there was some straggling. The next thing that we knew was that a heavy fire was opened on us from front and flanks from the next ridge farther on. The cunning old Bo had taken up a very good position. We at once opened out and sent the ponies back under cover, and made a steady advance up the slope, which proved to be a very nasty one. It was not till we got near the top and charged, that the dacoits left it. We then found that we had seven men hit and, as there were only eighteen of us actually attacking, this was pretty heavy. Ramsay[1] of the Rifle Brigade was hit on the foot, and Private Fox of the same regiment was shot through the heart when he was next to me. It was 3 p.m. by the time we got the wounded away, and I am afraid they had a pretty nasty shaking down the steep hill. The infantry then bivouacked for the night on

[1] Lieutenant Burnett Ramsay.

LIEUTENANT RAWLINSON WHEN A.D.C. TO LORD ROBERTS
IN INDIA, 1888

the site of the Bo's old camp, and we went back to headquarters with the M.I. The general at first seemed rather annoyed that we had not pushed on after the dacoits, but when he heard that, after deducting horse-holders, we had only eleven left, he agreed that we had acted quite rightly. However, as we were on the trail, he decided to push on again next morning after the very slippery Bo. The general gave us another section of the Rifle Brigade M.I. under a very good chap named Wilson,[1] and we started off at 5.30 a.m. on the 18th, passed over the scene of our skirmish of the previous day, and found the Bo's camp behind the ridge, again deserted. It was now past midday and the ponies had had no water, but we realized that the Bo would not have camped far from that necessity of life, so we pushed on and, sure enough, about half a mile farther on, we came on a mountain stream.

"After we had watered, Golightly got orders to go on with fifty of the Rifle Brigade M.I. to make a reconnaisance. Our way took us up the most awful hills, through bamboos so thick that we sometimes had to cut our way through them. Odd country for mounted troops, but the Burmese ponies are wonders. After a mile or two of this sort of thing, we called a halt to consider the position and get the men together. Golightly, Wilson, and I then agreed that if we advanced for another fifteen minutes or so, we should be within our orders, and might find out something useful. We had hardly gone on another ten yards when *bang! bang! bang!* came from the slope in front of us. We all took cover, and after replying to their fire pretty smartly I was sent off with a small party to make a flank movement to their right. This was quite enough for them, for I had hardly got to a clump of bamboos on the right of the ridge when their fire almost ceased. I looked up to see if I could catch sight of them bolting, when I saw the muzzle of a gun sticking out from behind a tree quite near, and two hands busy with a ramrod loading it. I waited till he put his head round the trunk to have a parting shot at us, and then up went my Winchester, and in answer to its crack he

[1] Afterwards Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson. This was the first meeting of the two friends.

threw up his arms and dropped. When we got to the top of the ridge, we found the dacoits had bolted as usual However, we had accounted for several of them and had only two casualties. Sergeant Madeley was hit through the chest, and our guide, a capital good chap, was struck by two slugs. We had got up the ponies and had just started in pursuit, when the recall was sounded from below, and we had sorrowfully to return. This will give you some idea of how difficult it is to catch these chaps in this sort of country."

It gives also a good idea of the kind of guerrilla warfare which went on for months in what was known as "the Subalterns' war."

After some ten days spent in harrying the Bo in this fashion, the column returned to Minbu for a short rest and clean up. Of that place, Rawlinson wrote: "The most curious sight in Minbu is the mud volcano. It consists of a number of cones of baked mud, surrounded by a lake of liquid and semi-liquid mud, smelling strongly of petroleum. There is, in fact, a constant stream of petroleum coming out of the cones, but no one seems to think of turning an honest penny by catching the stuff, which goes on bubbling and running away day and night. The liquid is a sort of greenish-grey pea-soup, quite warm, and one hears it coming up from the bowels of the earth some seconds before it bursts out of the crater with a blob and a splutter. I suppose when we have cleaned up this part of the world someone will make some money here." This conjecture proved to be well founded, for Minbu is now one of the main sources of supply of the Burma Oil Company.

By the middle of January, 1887, the Commander-in-Chief wanted his A.D.C. back, and Rawlinson returned from his first month's campaigning with an excellent report from General Low. In the following September he got his first mention in dispatches for his services in Burma. Back at Mandalay he was mainly employed in secretarial work for his chief, and while there began seriously to map out his career. In the middle of February he wrote: "I have had a long talk with the Chief about my future. He wants me

to come to him in Simla as one of his permanent A.D.Cs. It will mean my giving up my leave home which is due to me this year, but I'm sure you will agree that I would be a fool to refuse such a splendid chance. It will mean, of course, a lot of social work, some of which is rather a bore. But I find from the Chief's correspondence here that I'm getting a great insight into things, and I shall have even better opportunities at Simla. The Chief is most awfully kind. He says he wants me to work for the Staff College at Simla, and will do his best to help me. If I go up when my job with him comes to an end, I should be a captain by the time I have got through the College; and with a p.s.c. and my experience out here, I should be qualified for any staff job open to my rank. Anyhow, that's the programme and I mean to stick to it."

By March the campaign in Burma was progressing well and, as the authorities at home were getting impatient at Sir F. Roberts's absence from head-quarters, he left the country in that month and in April was established in Simla with his staff.

CHAPTER II

A.D.C. TO ROBERTS: WITH KITCHENER UP THE NILE

EARLY in April, 1887, the young A.D.C. was settled in Simla, where he quickly made himself at home. Amongst his colleagues on Sir Frederick Roberts's personal staff at that time were Lieutenant-Colonel Pole-Carew, afterwards General Sir Reginald Pole-Carew, in whose house he lived, and Brevet-Major Ian Hamilton, afterwards General Sir Ian Hamilton, so he had wise friends to bring him up in the way he should go. He was quickly on terms of intimacy with the Commander-in-Chief's family, and in May wrote from Mashobra, where the Roberts family used to go for an occasional rest from the demands of Simla: "We are having a most pleasant time on this charming spot. Lunch and tea under the trees every day; a sort of perpetual picnic in the most delightful of climates. The children are the greatest fun, and we have the most tremendous battles in the forest with fir-cones. Ambuscades, turning movements, and attacks in force on the most approved military principles. I have been doing quite a lot of sketching, but I find the colours in this clear air very difficult. I find I am improving steadily with my figures. Lady Roberts is coming home in June, and I think the Chief will let me have three months' leave home soon after. If I do get away, find me a good man who will give me some lessons in water-colours. I have just seen some lovely sketches done by Durand,[1] who came up with the Boundary Commission, and I am keen to be able to do as well as he. One has such glorious opportunities out here, but colour is everything, and I must get better at that. My first long leave I mean to put in a term at the Slade."

He got his leave and had his lessons at home. Just before starting, he wrote to his father on the subject which

[1] Afterwards Sir Mortimer Durand.

was uppermost in the minds of all those who were concerned in the defence of India. It was recognized on all sides that Russia's advance towards Afghanistan was for us the major military problem of the day. There were two distinct schools of thought, and at the head of each were our two leading soldiers. Naturally there was keen rivalry between the followers of Wolseley and Roberts, and controversy raged for several years. The Roberts school maintained that the right place to meet Russia was in Afghanistan; that in any event the defence of India involved the assembly by us of a considerable army on the Indian frontier and that, therefore, any attempt to meet Russia elsewhere would mean a division of force, which would be strategically unsound. Further, they declared that if we failed, in the event of war, to support the Amir in his own country, Afghanistan would inevitably become a fief of Russia, which would, in itself, be an outstanding victory for Russian policy.

The Wolseley school rejoined that we were first and foremost a sea power, and that to attempt to make our main effort against a great military power, such as Russia, on land, would be to resign our natural advantages. Our true policy for the defence of India, they argued, was to make it clear to Russia that any encroachment in Afghanistan would be a *casus belli*, and that if war came we should act where fleet and army could be used in combination. They proposed, therefore, that our policy should be to keep on the friendliest terms with Turkey, and, if the need arose, to send our fleet into the Black Sea and land in the Caucasus a force which would threaten Russian communications with Central Asia.

"I am awfully glad," wrote Rawlinson, "that I shall soon have a chance of talking to you about the political situation in the East, and what our policy should be. We hear that 'our only general'[1] is having a scheme prepared for moving an army corps to the Caucasus. It seems to me that it would have a poor time there surrounded by hordes of Cossacks and Usbegs, who would cut its communications if it attempted to advance from the shores of

[1] A nickname for Lord Wolseley.

the Black Sea. But what I think is most serious is that we are to be asked, in the event of war, to act on the defensive and to send troops and transport from here to the Caucasus. Now you know we could not act on the defensive on the North-West frontier. Defence in the East is always looked on as a sign of inferiority, and we should certainly have all the Afghans and frontier tribes against us, and probably risings in India behind us as well. Besides, it seems to me very doubtful policy to send native troops from here to fight in a strange country while their own land is threatened with invasion. What do you think about it all?"

In the late autumn he was back in India with a new paint-box and a selection from his father's papers on Central Asia and the North-West frontier. Soon after landing he went with the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy to Baluchistan, and from Quetta he wrote to his father:

"You would be interested to see this place now, after all the opposition there was to your proposal that it should be occupied. This is the first year the troops have been in Quetta all through the summer, and everyone swears by the climate. The men look fitter than any we have come across, either in the Punjab or elsewhere. The forts round Quetta are very nearly finished, and make a very strong system of defence against any attack from the direction of Kandahar or from the west. The two railways by Harnai and the Bolan Pass are wonderful bits of engineering and the scenery of the Bolan Pass is superb. I have made a lot of sketches and you shall have them when I have had time to finish them up. We went up to the frontier and had a look over that curious red desert south-east of Kandahar; the railway is all surveyed and marked out as far as Chaman, and we only need the consent of the Amir to push the railway on to Kandahar when necessary. The railway work is most popular with the natives. At present it is at a standstill for lack of funds, and there is a large crowd of Baluchis hanging round and praying for the work to be restarted. The right way to keep these fellows quiet is to find them jobs."

During 1888 Sir Charles Dilke went out to India to continue his studies of our military organization, and

Rawlinson read all his articles on the British Army. "Sir Charles," he told his father, "is quite right about military education. At present, to pass our exams we have to learn up some twenty or thirty pages of half a dozen text-books. No one who is any good takes an interest in that. The British officer is not a fool, and he is not going to waste his time on learning up theory which he knows will be no use to him; and if the exams were made more practical they would at once become more popular, and there would be plenty of that keenness which it is hard to find now. I don't agree with all Dilke's proposals; I think his idea of a great increase in our artillery would be a waste of money. I should prefer to see more money given to the encouragement of invention, so that the Army and Navy may be sure of having the best weapons, and also to improving the Volunteers. If a big war comes we shall want something more than our little Regular army."

If Rawlinson took every opportunity which association with Roberts, and his father's experience, afforded him of studying the big questions which confronted the army in India, he also took all the many chances which came in his way of enjoying Indian sport.

Roberts could not spare him for a sufficient time to enable him to play in the big polo tournaments, but he was a regular member of the "Snowdon"[1] team at Simla and elsewhere when he got a chance. It fell to his younger brother Toby to keep up the family's sporting reputation in that sphere, and just after his twenty-fourth birthday Henry had the pleasure of seeing Toby, who had come out as a subaltern to the 17th Lancers, play for his regiment, when it won the open tournament at Meerut. Henry, deprived by his work of winning the highest honours at polo, became a famous spear after pig, and he wrote many racy accounts of his rides after boar, of which this is one:

"I am just back from three days' pig-sticking and shooting with the Rajah of Kapurthala, where we had the best of times, accounting for ten fine boars on one day only. The first day was the best I have ever had, and my first ride on that day one of my most successful. As the elephants

[1] The name of the Commander-in-Chief's house.

were going through the first patch of grass which we tackled, I heard someone shout that a boar had gone out at the far end. I rode at once to the edge of the grass, where I saw a good boar about half a mile away trotting along. I gave the others a hullo and started after him, plunging through a nullah full of water, which soaked me nearly to the waist. Piggy did not see me till I got within two hundred yards of him, when he pulled up short, took a look at me, and then set off at his best pace for the jungle about a mile off. On looking round for the others, I found I was alone, as they had been stopped by the nullah. So, said I, this pig shall die with one spear, and I sat down and rode hard for half a mile until I got him on the edge of a steep nullah, which he could not get down. I then closed with him, and he charged, taking the spear just behind the shoulder blade; this rolled him over and when I got the spear out he couldn't move, so I finished him with a second thrust, just as the others came up, rather jealous of not having a look in. I was riding the new horse I got in Calcutta; she went splendidly, so I got five first spears out of the ten pig killed."

Another sporting adventure of a different kind took place when he revisited Peshawar in the company of the Commander-in-Chief: "It was great fun meeting the regiment again and seeing old friends—such good chaps too. They entertained us royally and amongst other diversions had a moonlight steeplechase all across cantonments. It was a fine sight to see eight smart ponies, with eight trousered jockeys in their white shirtsleeves, take the first fence—a hurdle—in the moonlight. The moon was nearly full, so there was plenty of light and very little grief. After a two miles' gallop, Dewar and I had a most tremendous finish. The winning-post was the mess table. I gained a length on him at the last fence, and just got through the ante-room door in front of him. So you see how we enjoy ourselves. We are not quite so decadent as some of your old club friends would have us believe."

He got plenty of the small-game shooting which India provided even more abundantly forty years ago than it does to-day, and made more serious expeditions after big game

into Kulu, Assam and Kashmir, where the scenery gave him even more pleasure than the sport, and in the mountains around Simla. Of one day after bear in these mountains with Captain Hobday [1] he wrote:

"So far we had got two bear, and the next morning heard news of more about six miles away. After a trying march over very rough country, we found ourselves at the foot of a mountain, and learned that there were bear near the top, so there was nothing for it but a climb of 2,000 feet. After two hours' hard climbing we came on our shikari in a huge state of excitement. He had seen a bear as big as a horse go into a patch of thick jungle about 200 yards off, and was certain he had not come out. We stationed ourselves on commanding points and waited another hour for the coolies to come up. When they arrived, we posted them above the jungle and made them shout and roll stones down into it. Two bears were soon on the move. The big one came past me about 100 yards below, and I was just able to get a snap shot at him, but missed. Soon afterwards I saw him again trying to sneak off about 200 yards away. I was then sitting on a ledge of rock, with a sheer drop of 300 feet below me. This time I was able to get a steady shot, and bowled him over. He fell into some jungle about sixty feet below, but he must have been a stout-hearted old customer, for the coolies saw him crawl out the other side into a shallow cave 150 feet above a waterfall. Hobday and I went down to the place, and, after we had chucked rocks at him for half an hour, he charged out straight for Hobday. He passed me within ten yards and I got a shot at him which stopped him. Hobday from above then got him between the shoulders, and that finished him. He rolled down the precipice into the torrent below. He was a magnificent specimen, and to get him out we had to tow him down over a second waterfall. Even then the coolies found him too heavy to lift, so we had to leave him for the night and return to skin him on the spot next day. You can understand that it was a pretty hard day's work, when I say that my boots, a good stout pair, were so cut

[1] Now Col. E. A. Hobday, C.M.G., then a brother A.D.C. and as good with pencil and brush as was Rawlinson.

It is by no means uncommon for a man, who proves himself to be of exceptional distinction of character and ability, to fail as a teacher to hold the attention of his students. I happen to have in my possession a letter written home in 1855 by a student of the Virginia Military Institute, in which the youth says: "I find studies this year a great deal more interesting, with the exception of one single one which so counterbalances the others as to throw all the rest into the shade. It is taught by a dull fool called Jackson." The biographer of "Stonewall Jackson" was in this matter, at least, better than his hero, and Colonel G. F. R. Henderson was, by the charm of his personality and the inspiration of his teaching, an influence which is almost unique in the history of the Staff College. Henderson was one of the great influences of Rawlinson's life as he was of the lives of most of those with whom he came in contact.

In 1893, Lord Roberts—as to Rawlinson's delight he had become in 1892—ended his tenure of the post of Commander-in-Chief in India, and came home. One of his first visits was to his old A.D.C. at Camberley, and Rawlinson was the first to introduce Henry Wilson to him. The defence of India was then still the major problem of the British Army, and was therefore naturally studied at the Staff College. The Field-Marshal and the two young men, threshed the subject out in Rawlinson's house, and Roberts, always on the look-out for young men of ability, was quickly taken with Wilson. So began a friendship which lasted until the Field-Marshal's death in the midst of our armies in 1914.

The overwhelming victories of Germany in 1870–71 had placed that country at the head of the military world, and that campaign was the chief item in the course of military history at the Staff College, though Henderson broadened it by introducing the not less interesting campaigns of the American Civil War. Virginia was a long way off, and Alsace and Lorraine were comparatively near, so an annual visit to the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian war was a regular part of the Staff College programme. Rawlinson was deeply interested by this experience and, as soon as his course was completed, he and Wilson went over for a

second and more leisurely tour than the official programme allowed. During this trip the two saw something of the French and German Armies, and Rawlinson was much impressed by the German troops. "The Germans," he wrote, "are miles ahead of the French in organization, equipment and training, and both are miles ahead of us. Our battalions are just as good as their battalions, but there we end. We live in watertight compartments, the infantry know nothing about the artillery, nor the artillery anything about the infantry, the cavalry nothing about either. In the big garrisons like Metz the troops are always working together, and their brigades and divisions are realities, not paper organizations like ours are. Wolseley is trying to shake things up, but we have a long way to go, particularly at home; India is better, but not good enough." This early impression of the German Army remained with Rawlinson. In the years which followed 1894 the French Army underwent a great revival, and Wilson became an enthusiastic admirer of the French system and troops. Right up to August, 1914, Rawlinson could never be persuaded that the French troops were in quality the equal of the Germans, and this remained one of the comparatively few differences between the two friends.

After he had completed the period of attachment to cavalry and artillery, which then followed the course at the Staff College, Rawlinson spent his winter leave in 1894 in a trip through Italy. Florence took his breath away. "I feel like the Queen of Sheba, the half was not told me. Our hours here were an infinite joy to me, and I can think of no better end to my days than to come here and study art seriously." It was his custom to combine business with pleasure, so, after wandering through Rome, Pompeii, Naples, and Sorrento, he went on to Bizerta. He was much impressed by the French development of the port, and with his faculty of finding the heart of a problem, prophesied the conclusion of the Entente. "The French are out to make a big thing of North Africa. Their communications across the Mediterranean run north and south, ours west and east, and sooner or later there is bound to be a collision unless we come to an agreement. The diffi-

culty, of course, is Egypt; but after talking with sensible Frenchmen here, I believe they would give us a free hand on the Nile, if we backed them in North Africa. Of course, the interests of the men on the spot are bound up in the future of this place [he was writing from Bizerta], and I don't know what they think in Paris. I must have a talk with Father about it when I get home."

From North Africa he came back to Malta and, the fleet being in harbour, he made his first acquaintance with the British navy. He went carefully over *Hawke*, then one of our newest first-class cruisers, and the battleships *Ramillies*, *Polyphemus* and *Camperdown*, and had a run in a torpedo boat. "Of course, naval gunnery is quite different from ours, but in some things they have a good deal to teach us, particularly in the use of optical instruments, many of which could be adapted to use in the field. It is the old story of watertight compartments. It is no one's business to pool experience. Here at Malta there is a big garrison and a big fleet, but neither really knows anything of the other." To complete his study of the Mediterranean he went from Malta to Tunis and Algiers, and then on to Gibraltar, where he was fortunate enough to witness practice by the batteries of the Rock. What he saw there confirmed the impressions gained at Malta, that the equipment of our military batteries was behind that of the navy's guns and capable of a good deal of improvement. The interest he took in every aspect of gunnery was remarkable in an infantry officer, and was to be put to good use in later life. He returned home with his wife through Spain, visiting a number of battlefields of the Peninsular War, and on reaching London noted in his journal: "So ends a most interesting and pleasant trip. I have gained much experience and more information than I could have obtained from a year's reading of consular reports and blue books. This is certainly the way to spend one's leave."

During his time at the Staff College, Rawlinson both worked hard and played hard. His quick mind and his skill with his pencil—field sketching in those days was much practised at the college, and was a sore trial to most—allowed him time for any sport that was going. He rode

hard with the college drag-hunt and was as keen a polo player as he had been in India. So some of the more plodding of his fellow students were disposed to regard him as superficial; but that the authorities thought otherwise was made clear when in November, 1895, he was appointed a brigade-major at Aldershot—one of the plums of the service open to a young staff officer. His father had not the satisfaction of learning of his son's advancement, for on March 5 he passed away just before his 85th birthday, full of years and honour. In 1891 he had been created a baronet by Lord Salisbury, and Henry, as his eldest son, succeeded to the title.

While at the Staff College he designed a pocket-book for field service, which was a practical and up-to-date development of Wolseley's more famous pocket-book. This he completed during his time at Aldershot, and its success was one of the reasons which induced the authorities to compile the modern official Field Service Pocket-book. At Aldershot, the Duke of Connaught was in chief command, and Rawlinson's brigadier was General Clery, his first commandant at the Staff College. There Rawlinson made a definite reputation as a practical staff officer, and was regarded as a coming man.

In those days the number of keen professional soldiers in the army was limited. Sir Ian Hamilton, in his evidence before the Norfolk Commission, after the South African War, speaking of the nineties of the last century, says that "keenness was out of fashion." The comparatively small group of the keen were rather like the first flight in a crack hunt in the shires. The best of friends, eager to discuss together the military problems of the day and the chances of adventure, they rode jealously and were wont to look askance at a new-comer to the band, or at one of their number who had managed to get away with the hounds by himself. Now it happened in the winter of 1897 that Lady Rawlinson was unwell, and was recommended by her doctor a stay in Egypt. Rawlinson took leave to accompany his wife, and sailed on December 6, 1897. The keen had had their eyes for some time upon the doings of the Sirdar of the Egyptian army, Sir Herbert Kitchener, who was creep-

ing up the Nile, and in September had occupied Berber. Rawlinson, who made it a rule of his life always to be ready for anything that might turn up, took his field-service kit with him, for he divined that there might be early developments in the Sudan. As it happened, though he did not know it, within a week of his leaving England, the British Government had informed Lord Cromer that an advance on Khartoum was to be made in the coming year, and that British reinforcements would be sent out for the purpose.

Cairo was buzzing with talk of the coming campaign when he arrived. The winter sun did Lady Rawlinson good, and he had spent a very pleasant fortnight in and around the Egyptian capital, when suddenly, on January 2, 1898, Sir Francis Grenfell, who then commanded the British troops in Egypt, sent for him and told him that Kitchener wanted an additional staff officer to deal with the British troops coming out, and that he had wired home to ask that Rawlinson should be appointed Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General on the Sirdar's staff. The thought of his first responsible appointment on active service naturally filled him with joy, and he was ready to leave Cairo in a few hours. Some of his friends at home were inclined to think that while still a staff officer at Aldershot he had jockeyed himself into an appointment in the field, but what actually happened he described in a letter to a friend.

"January 2 was a very exciting day. I went off to shoot duck at 7.30 a.m., and had a fair day's sport, getting sixteen duck. I was back by 6.45 p.m. to find a note to say that Grenfell wanted to see me at once. I dashed over to his house, and he told me that he had wired to the Secretary of State to ask if he might appoint me as D.A.A.G. to Kitchener for the British troops who are going up the river. It was a complete surprise to me, as I had no idea that any job was going, and all I had done was to tell Grenfell that if there was any chance of active service I would resign my appointment at Aldershot. Kitchener had wired to ask for another staff officer, and, as Grenfell could not spare one of his own, he thought of me. Lord Lansdowne wired confirming the appointment, and I imagine from the row there was about it at the War Office afterwards, that he did this

without consulting the Adjutant-General, otherwise I fancy I should not have been allowed to go. It is a great stroke of luck."

He might have added that it was also the reward for a good reputation, and for his judgment in being on the spot ready for work. Kitchener was running the Sudan campaign on strictly economical lines, and he was very willing to take a good staff officer whose passage out from England would not be a charge on his meagre budget.

Rawlinson's first impressions of his new master are interesting. "I think," he wrote, early in February, "that I get on all right with K. I was told that he was a queer customer, but I have never failed to hit it off with anyone who means business, as he certainly does. His is a curious and very strong character. I both like and admire him, but on some minor points he is as obstinate as a commissariat mule. He is a long-headed, clear-minded man of business, with a wonderful memory. His apparent hardness of nature is a good deal put on, and is, I think, due to a sort of shyness. It made him unpopular at first, but, since those under him in the Egyptian army have come to realize what a thoroughly capable man he is, there is a great deal less growling than there used to be.

"I heard a great deal, before I came up here, about the sketchy way in which the Egyptian Army managed their affairs, and their shilly-shally arrangements for supply. I am certain that, as far as management goes, they are very much maligned. Perhaps they err a little on the side of having too small a staff, just as the British Army errs on the side of having too many cooks. K. is keeping down expenses all he can, and won't pay for a staff officer until he can't do without him.

"The one serious criticism I have is that this is too much of a one-man show. If anything were to happen to the Sirdar there would be chaos, as no one but he knows the state of preparedness in which the various departments are. He keeps all information regarding the details of railways, transport, steamers, supply and intelligence, in his own hands, and shows wonderful skill in working the various strings. Everything works smoothly and well, as

long as he is at the head of affairs, but he does too much and may break down if he is not hit. I am trying to work out plans to relieve him of much of the detail which he does himself, and so far with some success."

His chief evidently agreed that he was successful, for, a few weeks later, when Lady Rawlinson was again ill and had to undergo a slight operation, Kitchener sent his staff officer back to Cairo and kept his place open for him. Lady Rawlinson fortunately recovered sufficiently for her husband to return without anxiety, in time to take part in the advance to the Atbara. The story of the River War has been told well and at length by Mr. Winston Churchill, and by Sir George Arthur in his "Life of Lord Kitchener," and there is no need to repeat it here at any length. The Khalifa had taken the occupation of Berber as a definite challenge, and had sent his chief general, Mahmud, with some 18,000 men, to recapture the place. It was news of the preparations for this enterprise which had caused Kitchener to ask for reinforcements of British troops. Mahmud had advanced and established himself towards the end of March on the Atbara, where he entrenched himself in a strong *dem* or zareba. Against this *dem* Kitchener advanced cautiously, and on April 5 arranged a final reconnaissance by his cavalry of the position of the Dervishes. Rawlinson was sent with this reconnaissance, to make sketches of the *dem*, and managed to get within 150 yards of the thorn fence with which it was surrounded. His work was interrupted by an attack of a superior force of mounted Dervishes, but, anticipating that an advance to the *dem* would be made by night, he managed, before he had to clear out, to mark a bush or two and a solitary tree in such a way as to be recognizable in the dark. The Dervishes were routed by a charge of Broadwood's Fellaheen cavalry; an event of some importance, for the long respite which the Khalifa had been allowed since the fall of Khartoum, and his brutal tyranny in the Sudan, had made his name one of terror in Egypt, and there was some uncertainty as to how Egyptian troops would comport themselves when face to face with the Dervishes. The Fellaheen cavalry had ridden straight under British leadership, and this fact con-

tributed to the confidence with which the final plans for the attack were prepared. It was Kitchener's practice to give most of his orders personally, and therefore there is little reference to them in the accounts of the campaign. Rawlinson, with his usual method, kept a record of the orders, both verbal and written, sent to the British brigade, and the final order for the night march to the *dem* concludes with a noteworthy paragraph: "The Sirdar is absolutely confident that every officer and man will do his duty, he only wishes to impress upon them two words: 'Remember Gordon.' The enemy before them are Gordon's murderers."

In the advance by night to the *dem,* Rawlinson assisted in guiding the British brigade. As the march was nearing its end, there came that moment of nerve-racking uncertainty common in advances by night, when the aspect of country familiar by daylight seems so weirdly changed, "Where are we? Has the direction been correctly kept?" In a few minutes' search, Rawlinson found one of the marks which he had made on the 5th, and all uncertainty was at an end. The attack was a brilliant success. Mahmud's force was routed, and he himself was captured.

His first sight of a stricken field made a deep impression on Rawlinson: "I hope never to have to see again so repulsive a sight as was that zareba. 1,350 corpses were counted within the limits of the trenches, and there must have been fully another 1,500 within half a mile of the circumference of the *dem.* The river bed was full, and I counted 60 in one heap, where it was reported that some Dervish cavalry had been posted to cut down any deserters who might try to make off early in the day. Mingled with the human bodies were dead and wounded camels, horses and donkeys. Pits had been dug as cover for the animals, and the wounded and unwounded beasts were struggling amongst the dead at the bottom of these. Amongst other horrible sights were six human heads stuck on sharp-pointed branches of a mimosa tree. They were all blacks, and I imagine had been executed for attempting to desert. Close by the heads was the dead body of a slave with the 'shuba' round his neck; the 'shuba' at the other end of the chain was empty, so I suppose his companion had managed to

escape.[1] The whole place was pervaded by the most appalling stink, and I was thankful to get away to our hot quarters without being sick."

Of his chief, in the conduct of a battle and in victory, Rawlinson wrote: "K. is a rum 'un, and a ripper. He is as hard as nails and as cool as a cucumber. He had a pretty anxious time from the beginning of the night march until the end of the battle, but the only thing I saw him disturbed about was the treatment of the British wounded, who, from lack of proper arrangements, suffered unnecessarily from the heat and from thirst. The medical arrangements in the British brigade were not nearly as good as those of the Egyptian Army, and K. was furious.

"He is full of brains and, if he can be induced to see that a certain amount of method and regularity are absolutely essential in a large army, he will one day be a very big man. Here he is an absolute autocrat, does exactly what he pleases, and won't pay any attention to red-tape regulations, or to the keeping of records of telegrams and letters. He rarely keeps a copy of any telegram or letter that he writes, and tries to prevent me from doing so, but he never, by any chance, forgets what he said or his motive in saying it. Despite, or perhaps in consequence of, the absence of red tape, things run smoothly. There is little or no correspondence, except by wire, and in the field almost every order is given verbally. Personally, I think this is carrying things too far and may, some day, lead to some bad misunderstanding in a crisis, but I admit that we in the British service go to the other extreme and, as a rule, write far too many orders. The system works because of K's wonderful memory and because they are all good men in the Egyptian Army. He has got the pick of the service, and they understand him, and he them."

The summer, after the defeat of Mahmud, passed slowly in the heat of the desert for the troops, but the staff was kept busy with the preparations for the advance to Khartoum. This was varied by speculations as to what would happen when the goal was reached. Marchand's movement to-

[1] The "shuba" is a wooden yoke fastened on the neck. Usually two slaves were linked together by a chain connecting the two shuba.

CAPTAIN SIR H. RAWLINSON ON HIS WAY DOWN THE NILE, 1898

From a Snapshot by Colonel Frank Rhodes.

wards the Upper Nile had not escaped notice. "I am sorry we couldn't push on immediately after the Atbara," wrote Rawlinson in the third week of May. "There are those who pooh-pooh French influence in the Upper Nile, but from what we hear from our agents, and from the French and German rifles found in Mahmud's zareba, there can be no doubt that communication does take place between the Khalifa and the French. The French have got some stout-hearted fellows out here, who are quite willing to take the risk of being disowned if there is any trouble, and I think that it is probable that the French Government is careful to know nothing of what is going on. We know that the French and Russians have great influence with Menelik, and it is quite possible they may encourage him secretly to oppose us on the Blue Nile, though I do not think that the Abyssinians are likely to assist the Khalifa to defend Khartoum. It would be a serious complication if we found Menelik and the French on the Blue Nile when we got there, and that is why I should feel safer if we were going to be at Khartoum in June instead of in September."

It will be remembered that Colonel Marchand reached Fashoda on July 10, nearly two months before the battle of Omdurman, and that thereby a crisis was provoked which almost brought us into collision with France.

For the advance to Khartoum the British troops were to be made up to a division, and the British cavalry regiment, the 21st Lancers, was to be added. General Gatacre, who had commanded the British brigade at the Atbara, became divisional general, with Generals Lyttelton and Wauchope as his brigadiers. The working out of the arrangements for the move of these reinforcements to the front, and for the organization of the new division, kept Rawlinson busy. Kitchener had a horror of large staffs and, despite this considerable reinforcement, Rawlinson remained the only staff officer for British troops at head-quarters.

The problem of the advance to Khartoum was, in the main, that of getting sufficient supplies at the right time to the right place. Though good progress had been made with the railway, the Nile remained the main channel of communication, and the difficulties of its navigation caused

many anxieties; the more so as the British reinforcements had been kept back till the last possible moment, and the sinking of a few barges in the final advance might cause a dangerous delay. Rawlinson gives a vivid picture of the passage of the Shabluka or 6th Cataract, the last to be negotiated: "On the evening of August 27, I packed as many of the Rifle Brigade as possible on to two barges and two gyasses, and we started south at 11.30 p.m., tying up for the night at the end of the good water, at the northern entrance of the Shabluka Cataract. I shall not easily forget our passage at daylight the next morning. I candidly admit I was in a blue funk, much more of a funk than I was ever in at the Atbara. The scenery reminded me of my first visit to the Khyber; if you can imagine the pass filled with a roaring torrent it will give you some idea of the appearance of the cataract. Of course, the hills on the banks of the Nile are not a quarter the height of the mountains of the North-West frontier, but their bare desolation and the complete absence of animal life reminded me of the Afghan scenery. But it is the rush and swirl of that huge volume of water which is the impressive feature of the Shabluka. The dark chocolate-coloured water dashes down in eddies and whirlpools, with a force which makes it impossible for any but the most lightly-laden steamers to keep in mid-stream; and everywhere except in mid-stream there are rocks which will tear the bottom out of any craft which strikes them. They are all well covered at high Nile, but their position can be easily spotted by the commotion on the surface of the water roaring over them. We could not venture into mid-stream with a heavy load of stores and some 400 men on board, so we zig-zagged from bank to bank, keeping for the most part in the slack waters. We just shaved the murderous-looking rocks of one promontory, with barely a foot to spare, to dash across the torrent into the slack water on the other bank, only to shave another rock which almost scraped our sides. At each shave I could not help thinking what a crash would mean, for there would have been little chance of any of our 400 men coming out alive from that seething torrent. I was heartily thankful when it was over, and we reached Jebel

Royan at 1 p.m. on the 28th, to find that Hunter with the Egyptian troops had started that morning for Wady-el-Abid. The Sirdar, with the British troops, followed him at 4.30 p.m. that evening."

This was the last stage in the concentration which Kitchener had been planning for months, and for which Rawlinson had been working out the details. In the forenoon of September 1 the whole army was approaching their last bivouac on the Nile before the battle, and the Sirdar, with his staff, rode to the Jebel Surgham to look out towards Omdurman: "We reached the Jebel Surgham between 1 and 1.20 p.m. The Sirdar stopped at the neck about half-way up the hill, but Long,[1] Rhodes,[2] and myself went on to the top. We had come to observe the bombardment, and to that naturally our first attention was given. It was in full swing. Hood and Beatty[3] with the gunboats were steaming slowly up the east bank of the river firing hard at the forts of Omdurman, while the howitzers, which had been landed on the east bank, had taken up a position just south of a clump of palm trees, opposite Omdurman. They were banging away hard. I saw several shells drop near the Mahdi's tomb, the most prominent object in the landscape. They had made a large hole in one side of the great white dome. I was speculating when the dome would collapse, when I became aware of huge lines of men drawn up in the open plain to the west of the city of Omdurman. I guessed at once that this was the Dervish army parading to march against us and, after our months of labour in the desert, I felt I could understand Moses' feelings as he looked out from Mount Gizireh. My two most vivid impressions as I gazed south, were the extent of the city of Omdurman, and the huge size of the Dervish army. That army must have been a good six miles from where I stood. It was drawn up in three dense lines, the third being apparently the largest. Each line was divided into formations something like our brigades. The

[1] Col. C. J. Long, commanding the artillery.

[2] Lt. Col. F. Rhodes, brother of Cecil Rhodes, then correspondent of *The Times*.

[3] Then lieutenants Royal Navy, the Hon. H. L. A. Hood and D. Beatty. Afterwards Admiral the Hon. H. L. A. Hood, who went down with his ship in the battle of Jutland, and Admiral of the Fleet, Earl Beatty.

whole army covered a front of not less than three miles. We could see our cavalry clearly on the low hills to the west of their line, and the 21st Lancers were on the north-western outskirts of Omdurman. The Dervishes did not seem to have any mounted troops, and I could not see any guns, but the distance was too great to be certain of this. Instinctively, after watching what I judged to be a mass of from 40 to 50,000 Dervishes, I turned round to look at the 22,000 men whom I knew would have to fight them that night or the next morning. They had reached and completed their zareba and, confined in a space 750 yards by 560, they looked a mere handful compared with the masses of gibbah-clad warriors, whose spears we could see glistening in the sun. Yet I could feel no doubt that discipline and modern weapons would be victorious. I looked at my watch—half-past one—the armies could not possibly be in contact before 4 p.m., and as that would not give us enough daylight to bring off the complete victory for which we hoped, it was not to our interest to march out to meet them. We went down to the Sirdar and he decided to strengthen our zareba at once, and not to march out till next morning. So we galloped back, and laid out a longer and better line of defence."

The next morning early, soon after Kitchener had set his force in battle array, came information that the Dervish army was advancing. "Nothing could have been better. The news passed along the ranks like wildfire, and every man was confident of victory. At length we could see our contact squadrons under Douglas Haig[1] gradually withdrawing as the Dervishes advanced, and I was sent out to tell him to fall back to the right rear, so as to enable us to open fire at long range. I rode out to him over the ground which an hour later was heaped with dead and wounded Dervishes. When I reached him he was within about 600 yards of the enemy's long line, and I noticed that his confident bearing seemed to have inspired his Fellaheen, who were watching the Dervish advance quite calmly. It was a magnificent sight, those thousands of wild brave savages

[1] Then Captain D. Haig, 7th Hussars, attached to the Egyptian Army. Afterwards Field-Marshal Earl Haig.

advancing to their destruction. We could plainly hear their yells and see them shaking their spears, but they did not think so small a party, as we were, worth shooting at. They kept a wonderfully good line in their advance, and, by the time I got back, were within 1,200 yards of our main body."

During the battle, Rawlinson was mainly occupied in taking Kitchener's orders to the British division. While doing this his horse was shot under him. "About 7.15 a.m. I was returning to the Sirdar, after seeing that the reserve ammunition for the British troops was in easy reach of the front line, and was cantering slowly along behind the

Ruins of Gordon's Palace, Khartoum, September 4, 1898.

(*A Sketch by Lord Rawlinson*)

Camerons, when I heard a crack, and Arrow, my best charger and very good friend, dropped on his knees. Blood was pouring from his nose to such an extent as to ruin my coat and breeches. Luckily I met Blenkinsop,[1] our chief veterinary officer, got a horse from him, and left Arrow in his care; but I fear I shall never ride him again."

To the rest of the story of the battle Rawlinson has nothing to add, either of general or personal interest, which has not already been told. But September 4, at Khartoum, was for him a day as memorable as that which saw the rout of the Khalifa's army: "We formed up opposite the palace, the British troops were on the right, the Egyptian on the left, all crowded in eight or ten deep, so that as many men

[1] Then Veterinary Captain L. J. Blenkinsop, afterwards Director-General Army Veterinary Services.

Benediction Prayer
used at the "Gordon
Memorial Service."
Khartoum. 4.2.98

O Almighty God, by Whose
Providence are all things
which come into the life
of men, whether of suffering,
which Thou permittest,
or of joy and gladness
which Thou givest; look
down, we beseech Thee, with
Eyes of pity and compassion
on this land, so loved
by that heroic Soul, whose
memory we honor before
Thee this day: - give back

to it- days of peace - Send to
it rulers, animated by his
spirit of justice and
righteousness - strengthen
them in the knight of Thy
power that they may labor
in making perfect the work
to which he devoted, and
for which he gave, his life.

And grant to us, Thy
servants, that we may copy
his virtues of self-sacrifice
and fortitude, so that when
Thou callest us may each
be able to answer "I have
fought the good fight"

A blessing
which we humbly ask - In
the name of the Father the
Son and the Holy Ghost- Amen

should be present as possible. The service was simple and most impressive and, when dear old Father Brindle[1] gave the benediction at the end, I have never, except in family trouble, felt so like bursting into tears. The Sirdar, who is, as a rule, absolutely unmoved, had great round tears on his cheeks. Then we hoisted both the Egyptian flag and the Union Jack over the palace.

"As they went up, the gunboats on the river crashed out a salute with live shell—they had no blank—and the moan of the shell hurtling through the still air added a weird and unusual note to the ceremony, which marked it, in my mind, as being not an occasion for triumph but for solemn resolve. This hoisting of the Jack, which we had definite orders to put up, was, of course, an event of deep political significance. Where our flag goes up, it does not quickly come down. But what it meant to me, and I think to most of us, was not that we had added so many thousand square miles to the British Empire, but that we had pledged ourselves to complete the work for which Gordon died thirteen years ago, and to free this land from brutality and tyranny. Father Brindle's prayer struck just the right note. He had written it out on a sheet of note-paper, and he gave it me after the ceremony. I shall treasure it as a possession."

A few days after, the Sirdar went off to meet Colonel Marchand, who, as had been expected, had arrived at Fashoda. Rawlinson had begged to be allowed to go too, but Kitchener had decided to send home the British troops at once, and his staff officer for British troops had to stay behind to reverse the process on which he had been engaged in the months preceding the battle of Omdurman. In October he was back in England, and in the *Gazette* of November 15, 1898, he read that he was to become a brevet lieutenant-colonel on his promotion to major in the Coldstream Guards, which was near.

[1] The Rev. R. Brindle, D.S.O., afterwards Bishop of Nottingham.

CHAPTER III

THE SIEGE OF LADYSMITH

THROUGHOUT the summer of 1899 the state of tension between the British and Boer Governments had been getting nearer and nearer to the breaking point, and Rawlinson, ever on the look-out for opportunities of service, was following events with close attention. In July he was very doubtful if there would be war, and in that month he wrote: "I hear B. P. has been ordered to Rhodesia to organize the defence of that colony in the event of war with the Boers. The fire-eaters are all for blood, but I am rather doubtful whether it will come to fighting. It seems to me that we must have a good *casus belli*. I can't believe that public opinion in this country would, after the Jameson raid fiasco, stand an invasion of the Transvaal, unless the Boers attacked us first; and Kruger is a canny old bird, who is not likely to do anything so foolish."

A month later he had changed his mind, and at the end of August wrote: "Last night I dined with X of the Intelligence Department and had a very interesting talk. He says the Boers have got in a lot of arms and are evidently out for war. He thinks it certain that the Free State will join the Transvaal and, if so, the Boers have enough arms to put 50,000 men into the field. I suppose old Kruger thinks he can swamp our small garrison before we can get out reinforcements, and that if he does that, we wouldn't think it worth the cost to reconquer South Africa. If that's his view, he does not know the British people. Anyway, it will be a big thing, and I wonder what my job will be."

Within less than a fortnight he knew, and on September 19, when on board the *Tantallon Castle* on his way to the Cape, he began his journal of the South African War: "My wife and I were staying with the Methuens at Corsham Court on September 12. I went out shooting with Paul,

and on my return found a telegram from Johnny Hamilton saying that he was sailing for the Cape on Saturday the 16th and had asked for me as his assistant. I posted up to town, and saw in the evening papers that Sir George White had been appointed to the command in South Africa, and guessed at once that Johnny Hamilton would be going on his staff. On getting to Charles Street, I found a note from Johnny saying that I was to be D.A.A.G. on the Head-quarters staff, and that they were sailing in the *Tantallon Castle* on the 19th. I find that I owe this appointment entirely to Johnny, as I don't know White personally, and he was at first averse to taking a Guardsman. However, Johnny cracked me up to him and I got the job. The notice was short, but I like short notice when one is going on the warpath, though it is hard on the wives, who are not prepared to have their world changed in a twinkling."

It will be remembered that on September 8, the British Government, mainly on the urgent representations of the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, had decided to reinforce the garrison of that colony by a brigade of cavalry, and a brigade of infantry with artillery and auxiliary troops from India, and to send another brigade of infantry from England and the Mediterranean to the Cape. It was these troops which, together with the existing garrison, Sir George White was going out to command. So Rawlinson set off for his third campaign, taking with him, as reading for the voyage, Henderson's "Stonewall Jackson," Lord Bryce's "Impressions of South Africa," and Martineau's "Life of Sir Bartle Frere." "Three of the best books I have read for a long time. These, with the handbooks on South Africa and a few detective stories for lazy moments, have served to keep my mind quiet during a long voyage, in which we are all on tip-toe of expectation."

The *Tantallon Castle* arrived at Cape Town on October 6, and its passengers were met with the news that, though war had not been declared, the situation was highly critical. The Free State had joined the Transvaal, and large Boer commandos were reported to be out on the borders both of Natal and the Cape Colony. Sir George White, after an interview with Sir Alfred Milner and General Forestier-

Walker, in command at the Cape, decided that the situation in Natal was the most dangerous, and left at once for Durban, where he arrived with his staff on October 7. That night, Rawlinson sized up the military position: "This distribution of the military forces in Natal, to my mind and also to Sir George's, is an impossible one. The Boers are known to have some 15 to 20,000 men on the frontier, and all told we have not 10,000 in Natal. Yet these are split up, half at Glencoe and half at Ladysmith, both of which are, in my opinion, much too far forward to secure the defence of the Colony.

"It is my conviction that if Natal is to be defended successfully with the forces we have available, against an enemy greatly superior in numbers, and armed with modern weapons, the only thing to do is to hold the line of the Tugela and give up Dundee and Ladysmith altogether. But I understand that the Governor will not hear of our leaving even Dundee. He is afraid of the moral effect of a retirement on the Boers in the Cape Colony, and on the natives. The native problem is one with which we are faced wherever we go, and it is a difficult one, but we should not allow it to force us into false positions. It seems to me that the effect on the natives will be much greater if we are driven back than if we fall back. If we don't go back to the Tugela we shall be roughly handled.

"I don't much like the tone amongst our fellows out here. Symons[1] is brimful of confidence, and all the rest follow him. They talk as if the war were over, now a brigade is coming from India, and speak of a British brigade being able to take on five times in Boers, which is silly rot."

War was declared at midnight on October 11–12, and on the following day Rawlinson did not find the position more comforting. "We British soldiers have a difficult time. Political considerations make it certain that nine times out of ten we are too late, and then we have to do everything in a hurry. Johnny Hamilton and I have been hard at it trying to sort things out, but it is a heavy job and everything is upside down. This comes from being tumbled out

[1] Major-General Sir W. Penn Symons, K.C.B., commanding in Natal up to the time of Sir George White's arrival.

at the last moment into a position that is militarily false. Troops, odds and ends of hospitals, ordnance stores, Army Service Corps and ammunition columns are all coming in higgledy-piggledy, without any shape or organization. The result is chaos, but it will shake down in time."

Fortunately the Boers hesitated long enough to allow some organization to be established, defences to be prepared round Ladysmith, and supplies of food and ammunition to be brought into the place. His part in all this kept Rawlinson busy. Hamilton had been appointed to the command of an infantry brigade, and Rawlinson had become Assistant Adjutant-General to Sir Archibald Hunter, Sir George White's Chief of Staff. On October 20 came the news of the action of Talana. Sir William Penn Symons, true to his belief in the power of British infantry to disperse any number of Boers, had fallen gallantly leading his men to the attack, and his successor, Colonel Yule, was left to conduct an anxious retreat to Ladysmith. Then, the next day, the toilers in Ladysmith were cheered by the news of Elandslaagte, where a force of British troops under French defeated a body of Boers. Of the fight Rawlinson wrote on October 22. "Hamilton and Haig came in at 11.30 a.m., with the commander of the troops, and gave me a detailed account of Elandslaagte. The Boers seem to have fought like men, particularly the Johannesburg commando. We have no soft job here. From what Haig tells me, Johnny Hamilton was the hero of the fight. He combined great personal gallantry with great skill. He handled his infantry splendidly, and chose exactly the right moment for his final attack, which he led himself. Then, when all seemed over, a party of Boers suddenly made a determined counter-attack, taking our men for the moment by surprise and establishing themselves once more in the position we had captured. There was a good deal of confusion, and things looked ugly, but Johnny rallied the Gordons by his personal example, led them to the charge, and drove the Boers down the hill. I hear he is to be recommended for the V.C., and he richly deserves it." [1]

[1] V.C.s were awarded to Captain M. F. Meiklejohn and Sergeant-Major Robertson of the Gordons, and to Captain Mullins and Johnston of the Imperial Light Horse, for gallantry on this occasion, but not to Colonel Hamilton.

The hopes which Elandslaagte had aroused were quickly dashed by Lombard's Kop and the disaster of Nicholson's Nek. On November 1, Rawlinson wrote: "Well, we are in for a siege. It will be an unpleasant business, but I am certain we can hold this place till the main advance through the Free State makes the Boers withdraw. Personally, I would much rather be fighting the Boers on the plains of the Free State than in these hills, but that is the fortune of war. The surrender of the Gloucesters and Royal Irish[1] has been a heavy blow to the Chief, and he feels the responsibility of it deeply. It will be a great encouragement to the Boers, and has had a very depressing effect on our men, who had never conceived of the possibility of a British battalion surrendering to farmers. This is the natural reaction from over-confidence, and they will recover. What surprised me most at Lombard's Kop was the Boer artillery. Their field-guns have more range and power than ours, and their shooting was amazingly accurate. This is an eye-opener to our gunners. They are the best horse masters in the world, but they think too much of their horses and not enough of their guns. The old Boer drags his guns about anyhow, but he gets them to the right places and then shoots as if he had spent his life at an artillery school. It is lucky for us that Lambton got in on the 30th with four naval 12-pounders and two 4·7's, which will give us an answer to the Boer long guns."[2]

Rawlinson, always interested in gunnery, had early in the siege two personal experiences of the accuracy of the Boer long guns: "I went up in the balloon to 1,600 feet, and got a splendid view of the surrounding country in still, clear weather. I did not feel a bit sick, but was inclined to hold very tight. The Boers seem to be scattered all over the country round us, and not in any great numbers anywhere. Joubert's camp is visible about half a mile behind Pepworth Hill. I found it difficult to spot the guns, as the balloon rocks about and keeps revolving so much that one

[1] At Nicholson's Nek.

[2] It was at Rawlinson's suggestion that the naval guns, which played so important a part in the defence, were brought into Ladysmith. *Vide* Sir G. White's speech, delivered at the Ladysmith dinner, February 28, 1902.

cannot keep one's glasses steady. As we were coming down, one of the Boer guns on Bulwana put a shell right through the balloon at 8,000 yards. Wonderful shooting, even if the actual hit was a bit of a fluke. The remarkable thing was that, though the shell made a hole right through the skin of the balloon, we only came down a little faster than usual, and did not even bump on landing."

The other experience was even more exciting: "They nearly got me just now. I think they have found out where the Chief lives. Lawson[1] and I were discussing things in my office when Bulwana Tom, my old friend of the balloon, opened fire. He dropped two shells close to Ward's[2] house, about 30 yards from my office, and then another ten yards from my window. I ran out to pick up the driving-band and carried it back to my bedroom, when a fourth shell went bang right into my office and appears to have landed on my writing-table. It blew out all four walls and smashed the floor to pieces."

However, it did not take the garrison long to become accustomed to the intermittent Boer shelling, and, in the third week of November, Rawlinson writes: "I spent a few idle minutes watching the Imperial Light Horse play cricket. They kept a man to watch Bulwana Tom, and when he saw the flash he shouted 'Here she comes!' The batsman pretended to play the shell, when, to his astonishment, it landed on the pitch about three feet from him. The concussion knocked him down, but he was not a bit hurt."

To Rawlinson's active mind, the most trying part of the siege was the enforced inactivity, and he was continually thinking out enterprises which would worry the Boers. As early as November 11, he wrote: "We must be very careful with our ammunition, as we have less than 300 rounds a gun, and it will do no good to be drawn into desultory replies to the enemy bombardment. But it seems to me there are other ways in which we can make the Boers uncomfortable. It occurred to me, while I was watching Bulwana Tom to-day, that it would be easy to get up to him one night and put a lump of gun-cotton down his throat,

[1] Now Lieutenant-General Sir H. Lawson.
[2] Now Colonel Sir E. Ward.

LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR H. RAWLINSON'S OFFICE AT LADYSMITH AFTER A VISIT FROM "LONG TOM"

LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR H. RAWLINSON AND HIS CHARGER, PRETORIA, 1901

the explosion of which would damage him beyond repair. So I suggested to Sir George that he might let me go and have a try one night. There would be very little risk, for the way up is easily marked, and I don't fancy the Boers keep a very sharp look-out at night. The odds would be well in our favour, and if we were successful we would relieve Ladysmith of one of the larger thorns in her side, and the tender side too. However, the Chief would not hear of it, but he may be persuaded later."

Sir George White was persuaded later, and the enterprise came off on the night of December 7-8. "Hunter's business was a splendid success last night. He and David Henderson[1] persuaded the Chief to agree to my plan for having a go at Bulwana Tom. I was very sick at not being allowed to go myself, as it was my idea, but Hunter and I could not both be out of the office at the same time, and he claimed the job. He is such a splendid leader that I could not complain. They alarmed a Boer picket at the foot of the hill and, when half-way up, some score of Boers opened fire on them, wounding one man of the Imperial Light Horse mortally, and two others slightly. David Henderson and two of the guides were also slightly wounded. Carrie Davis then shouted out 'Fix bayonets and charge!' and the Boers, having no liking for cold steel, bolted. They then got to the top of the hill, and found Bulwana Tom in a huge work with a parapet broad enough to drive a coach and four round the top. Fowke[2] got quickly to work with his gun-cotton and destroyed the two larger guns with two charges in each; the third gun, a Maxim-Nordenfeldt field gun, only required one charge. They brought back the sights and breach-block of Long Tom, and a machine gun, and were back in our lines by daylight. A fine show which has cheered everyone up."

During the latter part of November there had been intermittent communication between Sir George White in Ladysmith and General Clery, who commanded the relief forces in Natal, but Sir George and his staff had only vague

[1] The late Lieutenant-General Sir D. Henderson, then Intelligence Officer to Sir G. White.

[2] Captain (now Lieutenant-General Sir G.) Fowke, afterwards Chief Engineer and Adjutant-General to Sir D. Haig.

information of what was happening outside. On November 29 came the first news from Sir Redvers Buller himself. The next day Rawlinson told how the news arrived. "I was on the look-out last night, when I spotted a light in the sky, which I thought must be signalling. Our sgnallers had not noticed it, but when I pointed it out to them they took down with some difficulty a message which we made out to be 'I do not yet know which way I shall come. How long can you hold out? Buller, Maritzburg.' This is the first news we have had of Buller's being in Natal, and I don't like it. I had a long talk to-day about the message with the Chief. He thinks Buller should fight Joubert in Natal, sending more troops here if necessary. I entirely disagree. The war must be won in the Free State, not in Natal, and I would hasten the movement north on Bloemfontein at all hazards. I would risk the fall of Ladysmith and even of Maritzburg to get well into the Free State and threaten Pretoria. Once we are on the way to Pretoria the Boers will not dare to stay in Natal. To fight them here is like kicking a man in the shins instead of going for his heart. Carry the war into the enemy's country. Strike at his vitals as rapidly as possible, and the issue of the war is certain. If we fight him here we fall in with his wishes, and will lose twice the number of men, even if we are successful, which is no certainty." It will be gathered from this that Rawlinson was prepared for the bad news of the failure at Colenso.

"*December 16.*—A cipher message has come in from Buller beginning: 'I tried Colenso yesterday and failed.' It goes on to hint that we may have to capitulate. This is serious. I am not at all afraid of Boers, but I am afraid of enteric, which is taking toll of us and will get worse as rations get shorter. I saw the Chief about Buller's message, and he has taken it splendidly and sent a fine reply saying: 'The loss of 12,000 men here would be a heavy blow to England. We must not yet think of that.' It is an odd position, the besieged bucking up the relieving force. It all comes of bad strategy."

With Buller established on the Tugela, and a succession of bright days, a regular service of communication was

established with Ladysmith, and even private messages began to come through. Rawlinson was cheered by a bright message from his wife and by another from Henry Wilson. Good news naturally alternated with bad and, on December 27, Rawlinson first heard of the death of Lord Roberts's son. "To-day I had news which has affected me more than any since the beginning of the war. Little Freddy Roberts was killed at Colenso. The helio message says 'He was shot in the groin, whilst gallantly trying to save the guns.' He was such a charming and fine lad, and I fear to think of the effect his death will have on his family. His poor mother will be terribly broken by it." Four days later he learned that the death of his only son had not kept the father mourning at home. "To-day we got the best news we have had since the siege began. Roberts is coming out to be Commander-in-Chief, with Kitchener as his Chief of the Staff. It is splendid of the old chief to take on this heavy task right on top of the news of Freddy's death. If I know anything of his mind, this means that at last we shall go for the Free State. I hope it also means that when I get out of this place I shall go to Head-quarters."

On January 6 came the determined Boer attack on Cæsar's Camp, and that night Rawlinson wrote: "A heavy day. The Boers were bold and plucky to a degree which surprised us all, even after their counter-attack at Elandslaagte. They made a lodgment on Wagon Hill at a point which commanded almost all the hill, and were in possession of it all day until turned out by a fine charge of the Devons just before dusk. They were only pushed out by the dash and gallantry of Hamilton and some other fine officers, notably Digby Jones of the R.E., who was unfortunately killed. Hamilton did more than glorious work with troops which were far below their best. I don't gather that there were ever very many Boers on the top of the hill, but those who got there were brave fellows who fired very rapidly and very accurately. I hear of a party of four Boers who got together behind a rock and did great execution. Only two of them were hit. Incidents were numerous. Digby Jones saved the situation at one moment by jumping out into the open and shooting down the Boer leader, just as

the enemy were getting into our 4·7 gun emplacement, and he then led a charge of odds and ends of sappers and naval engineers which drove them back. One officer of the Gordons found himself a prisoner in a sangar with five Boers. He said that in the circumstances he was entitled to the safest place, and lay down behind the Boers, all of whom were killed by our fire. He got back untouched. I expect that this attack means that the Boers are beginning to feel Buller's pressure and are anxious to be done with us. They may try one more dash before they have to turn to meet Buller, but I'm sure we can hold them, though I am still worried about the enteric; we have over 600 cases, and that is a heavier drain on our strength than a Boer attack."

The days that followed the Boer attempt on Cæsar's Camp were followed by anxious watching for signs of another attack. When no indication of another enemy enterprise against Ladysmith was apparent, the expectant watchers turned their eyes to the southern hills for signs of Buller's next movement, which Sir George White had been informed, on January 8, was about to begin. On the 12th Rawlinson writes: "The Chief is worried and anxious. Buller keeps asking him for advice, which doesn't sound well, and is not fair on White, who doesn't know enough about the situation outside to make plans for Buller. The Chief this morning asked for a state of the troops, which I have made out for him. He contemplates trying to help Buller by moving out with a small flying column, and even marching towards Buller with the whole of the Ladysmith garrison, leaving the sick and wounded in Ladysmith to their fate. This would be to my mind a very grave mistake, for, even if we succeeded in joining Buller, Ladysmith would have fallen, the Boers would justly claim a great success, and our general position would be worse than if Buller failed a second time. We can hold out here for at least another month, and during that month, if we keep the Boers around us occupied, our friends outside can do a good deal. We should never be forgiven for deserting the sick and wounded, women and children, and the ignorant would say we did it to save our skins. I am certain that it is our duty

to our country to stick to this place and defend it as long as we can. That is the best way to help Roberts's campaign in the Free State, which must be starting soon. If I were the Chief I should say: 'I refuse to move out and leave my sick and wounded unless I get distinct orders from Buller to do so.'

"Of course it is a great comfort to get private news from outside, but it has its disadvantages. This morning was dull and cloudy and cold, and no helio messages came through. There was much activity visible amongst the Boers, commandos were moving about and laagers were being shifted. We thought we heard firing from the direction of Potgieter's, and then, about 4.30 p.m., a dim sun came through the clouds and we picked up a helio obviously from Buller's force, and, as we judged, about 14 miles away. We were full of excitement to get the news, and when the message was taken down it read, 'Did you give A. Jones message?'"

During the last fortnight of January the garrison was kept continuously on tenterhooks. On the 17th, for the first time, British shells could be seen bursting on the hills east of Potgieter's Drift, and the next day came the welcome news that Lyttelton's brigade had got across the Tugela. On the 19th the first sounds of British rifle-fire in the south were heard, and hope ran high, the general expectation being that Buller would be in Ladysmith before the end of the month. The watchers of the hills to the south became keener than ever to miss no signs of Buller's advance. The noise of battle drew nearer and became clearer; on January 22 full rations were issued to the garrison and relief was declared to be at hand. That evening Rawlinson wrote: "Everything seems to me to depend on Warren's attack on Intaba Wyama. The uncertainty of helio communication is very trying. We were panting this evening for news of Warren's progress, when we saw the helio at Spearman's Kop. The message was, 'Nothing more. Good night.'"

However, Buller had signalled earlier that he was attacking Spion Kop on the 24th, and as the kop was clearly visible from his usual look-out position, Observation Hill,

Rawlinson was there at dawn. "It was soon after noon that I first noticed Boer guns firing on Spion Kop. I could not see any of our men about, but, as the Boers would not be firing at nothing, I took this to mean that Buller's men had got to the top of the kop. I then saw a party of about 200 Boers going up the hill, and at about 3.30 p.m. very heavy shrapnel fire being directed on the part for which the Boers were making. Then suddenly the shrapnel ceased, at about 5.30 p.m., and we saw about 150 men advancing in a rough line over the shoulder of the hill and coming towards us. We took them to be British soldiers, but though they crossed ground which the Boers had shelled in the morning there was no firing at them. The light got bad soon afterwards, and we could not be certain whether they were British or Boers; if British, I am horribly afraid they were prisoners. Our men were certainly at one time in possession of about half the hill, but the light was too bad to say whether they were able to hold on to it or not." Late that night a message came through from Buller to say that Spion Kop had been taken, but the following morning Boers were clearly seen on the top of the hill. The day was cloudy, but there were breaks of sunshine when, in Rawlinson's opinion, messages could have got through. "This state of uncertainty is very trying to Sir George. My own opinion is that Buller had a check yesterday, is not too certain about the situation, and is hoping to retrieve it before admitting failure. It seems certain that the Boers took 80 to 100 prisoners yesterday, and that there has been some kind of local armistice on the top of Spion Kop."

On the 27th Rawlinson wrote: "It is the infernal uncertainty of communications which is to blame, and not Buller. A message came through from him on the night of the 25th, saying that Warren attacked Spion Kop on the 24th, held it throughout the day, but suffered heavy loss. We did not get the rest of it until this morning, as the 26th was dark and cloudy, and the rest was bad. Buller is withdrawing to Potgieter's Drift, and the second attempt at relief has been a complete failure. The Chief has replied to Buller, offering to abandon Ladysmith as a last resort in an attempt

to join him if the Government approves. The position is undoubtedly a desperate one, and I dare say Sir George was quite right to make the offer; but I think he knows as well as the rest of us that we should have little chance of success against the entrenchments which have been erected round us, and, personally, I am confident that neither Bobs nor the Government will sanction the desertion of Ladysmith."

Rawlinson had not long to wait for confirmation of his views.

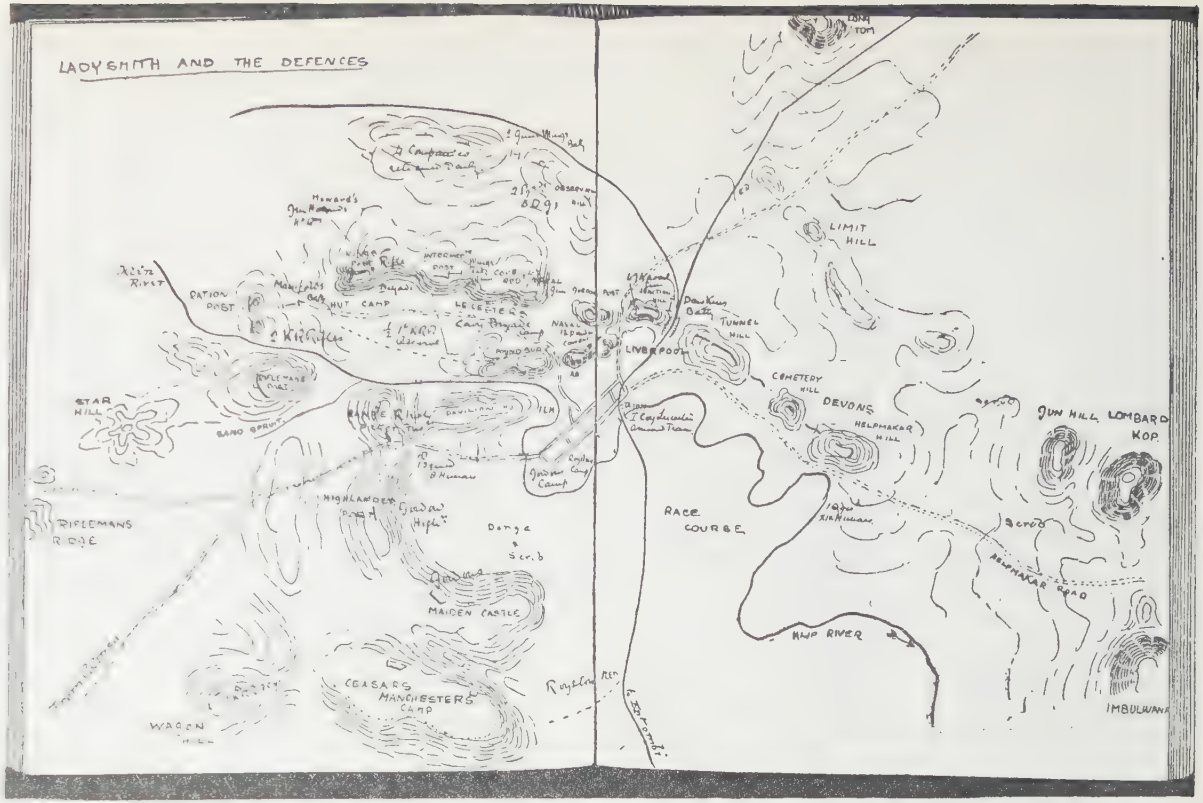
"*January 28.*—A busy day with ciphers. A long message from Buller and another from Bobs, who pointed out the importance of our holding on here to the end, and says that by the end of February he expects to have made such progress as will relieve the pressure from us. Bobs is certainly right, and the real relief of this place must come from the west. As soon as he is threatening Bloemfontein, the Boers will be off from here. We can hold out at least six weeks if we eat our horses. Whether we are starved out or not, the Boers will have reached their limit by the end of February, and from that time on the tale will not be of British but of Boer disasters. Whatever happens to us, we shall have done our bit by keeping them busy down here. The people I am sorry for are those at home, who are racked with anxiety and get very little news of us, especially the poor old Queen, who has reigned over us so well and so long. This is a sad blow for her in her old age."

After the failure of Spion Kop, there was a lull, with little news and no sound of Buller's guns until he began his attempt at Vaal Krantz on February 5. Absence of news was a severe trial to the anxious garrison, and nerves became more and more strained. "It is curious how petty we become when we are anxious. There is a lot of silly jealousy of the Gordons, which is Sir George's own regiment; he is supposed to be nursing them unfairly. These things affect the health of the troops. In the battalions in which the officers really live with the men, and exert themselves to keep their spirits up, there is very little sickness; while in those in which the officers grouse, and obviously have their tails down, the men go sick by the dozen daily.

If Sir George would go about a bit more and talk to the officers and men, he could do a lot to keep their spirits up; but he is not well himself, and inclined to worry, so he sticks to his house and the troops never see him. The real soul of the siege is Hunter, who is always about, always cheery, and always does the right thing at the right time. I never thought he would have made a Chief of the Staff, for his real rôle is that of a leader of men, but he couldn't have done better than he has."

On February 5 tension was relieved, as the sounds and signs of Buller's fight for Vaal Krantz began. For three days the ebb and flow of battle was eagerly watched, and hope rose and fell as the bursting shells drew nearer or receded. On the night of the 7th the signallers at Spearman's Hill reported that, as far as they could see, all was going well. "This is reassuring, but so far we have had nothing from Buller himself." The next morning news from Buller came in: "The Devil must be in control of the clouds over Ladysmith. About 6.30 a.m., an urgent cipher began to come in from Spearman's Hill, but when we had taken down about twenty groups the signallers at the other end stopped and the light began to go. So we have only got a bit of the message, but it is quite enough to spoil our breakfast. Buller says that he finds the enemy in front of him too strong. He thinks he could take the position, but only with very heavy loss. He then goes on 'my plan is,' and then the message breaks off. Could anything be more trying of patience and temper? However, we are getting used to bad news, and to the failure of Buller's schemes. As far as I am concerned, there is no difficulty in keeping cheerful with such good fellows as Hunter, Lawson and Duff[1] on the head-quarters staff; but it is another matter with the troops, and it is painful to see the number of woe-begone faces, pinched by want of good food, and often by sickness as well. The civilians, who have been very plucky up to the present, are also beginning to lose heart, and some of them are going about prophesying disaster and saying that the Boers will be in Ladysmith in a week. The real reason for this is that they have,

[1] The late General Sir Beauchamp Duff.



THE DEFENCES OF LADYSMITH

(From Lord Rawlinson's Journal)

many of them, very little to do but sit still and think; not a cheerful occupation when your stomach is empty. We are therefore calling for volunteers to be armed and formed into a battalion. The response has been very good. We ought to have done this before."

While waiting for news, the nightly auction of luxuries, and the dodges for replacing such luxuries as were unobtainable, were the chief items of interest. On February 11 Rawlinson notes that a box of Indian cheroots fetched £16 10s.; a dozen boxes of inferior matches, ten shillings; and that eggs were selling at four shillings each. "English tobacco has gone long ago, and even Boer tobacco is very scarce. The men make quite a good substitute by collecting cigar ends, the scrapings of pipes and tea leaves, and boiling the lot into the consistency of thick soup. The soup is then dried in the sun, and the result is quite a smokable mixture!"

On February 13 news arrived, surprisingly enough, not from Buller, but from Lord Roberts: "At last we have news, a cipher message came in from Lord Bobs saying: 'I have entered the Free State with a large force, especially strong in cavalry, artillery and mounted infantry. Inform your troops of this, and tell them from me that I hope the result of the next few days will lead to pressure on Ladysmith being very materially loosened.' This has bucked everyone up tremendously, which is an excellent thing. Sir George is cocksure that Bobs will be in Bloemfontein in a week, and will then send a force to turn Van Renan's and the other passes within three weeks. This seems to me too optimistic, but it is certain that our entry into the Free State will soon relieve pressure here. What a glorious day for us all it will be when we are relieved."

For the next twelve days little news came from Buller, who, after his many failures, was chary of rousing hopes in Ladysmith which might not be justified; but the spirits of the garrison were maintained by the announcement of the relief of Kimberley on the 16th, and, ten days later, of Cronje's surrender to Lord Roberts; while all the time the sound of Buller's guns and musketry drew slowly nearer. At last, on the morning of the 28th, Buller heliographed,

"Have thoroughly beaten the enemy. Believe them to be in full retreat. Have sent cavalry to ascertain which way they have gone." That night Rawlinson wrote: "Great things have happened this afternoon. Dundonald, with two squadrons of Buller's force, one of the Imperial Light Horse and one of Natal Carbineers, have ridden in here. I first saw Dundonald's cavalry on the ridge above Intombi about 5 p.m., and we sent out Royston's men to meet him. An hour later the two squadrons were in, and Sir George went down to meet them. On his way back Sir George was surrounded by a mob of soldiers and civilians, who cheered him like mad, and obliged him to say 'a few words.' This he did very feelingly and effectively. I am going out with Dundonald at dawn to give Buller all information about Ladysmith.

"*March 1.*—This has been a glorious day. I rode out with Dundonald, and got to Pieters Station about 8 a.m., having passed many of Buller's troops on the way. I greeted them with the news, 'All is well in Ladysmith,' which they received with prolonged cheers. At the crossing near Pieters Station, I met Lyttelton, who directed me to Buller. I found him just outside the station and congratulated him heartily on his success. He decided to march his troops into Ladysmith to-morrow, and then said he would come on at once to meet White, so I helioed to Sir George to say he would be in between noon and 1 p.m. Buller rode through the Intombi camp, which delighted the sick. The meeting with White took place just outside the jail, but, as no one knew that Buller was coming, there was no demonstration. Sir George tells me that Bobs has wired to ask for the services of Ward, Hamilton and myself. This is what I had hoped and expected. It will be a joy to be with Bobs and Kitchener once more. My one regret is parting with Hunter, to whom I am much attached. I got a packet of nearly sixty letters to-night. Heaven knows when I shall find time to read them. Henry Wilson rode in to see me this afternoon. He is very fit, and gave me a very interesting account of the fighting of the relief force. I gather that Buller and most of his generals have been at loggerheads, and that accounts for much. You can't win battles without

team work, and there seems to have been very little of that in Buller's force. His men look splendid; I have never seen such infantry as the men of Warren's and Lyttelton's divisions. The British infantry has once more saved their generals."

On March 12, Rawlinson left Natal, and set out for Lord Roberts's head-quarters, then in Bloemfontein.

CHAPTER IV

WITH ROBERTS AND KITCHENER IN SOUTH AFRICA

RAWLINSON arrived in Bloemfontein in the third week of March. "I found the Chief at the Residency where President Steyn used to live, and I at once tumbled across Neville Chamberlain, who took me up to his room to wash. I then breakfasted with the Chief, and afterwards had a long and interesting talk with him, especially about Ladysmith, Buller, and his force in Natal. I was astonished to find how much he knew, and his grasp of the whole situation. He won't allow Freddy's death, terrible blow as it has been, to weigh on his mind while the public service requires all his attention. My admiration for him is greater than ever. He has asked me to be a member of his mess, and live in his house, which is spacious and comfortable, with bathrooms, carpets and mirrors, and all the luxuries of Maple's upholstery, so I have kept up my practice of falling on my feet.

"I am to work in the Quartermaster-General's department under Grierson.[1] This is a most interesting and responsible work, and I am delighted to be with Jimmy." Under Lord Roberts's system, the Quartermaster-General's department performed most of the functions which are to-day the business of the General Staff, and Rawlinson was at once hard at work preparing an organization of the army for the advance on Pretoria. This was no light task, for troops had been sent hither and thither as they arrived, to meet emergencies as they arose. Numerous bodies of troops had been raised in Cape Colony and in Natal, others were coming from the Dominions, and Imperial Yeomanry was coming out from home. All these had to be fitted into higher organizations and provided with the

[1] The late General Sir James Grierson.

means of maintaining themselves in the field. In fact, in Bloemfontein we began to experience the drawbacks of having no system for the expansion of the regular army in times of war. To this lack of system, more than to any other single cause, was due the length of the South African War; and it was in great measure his conviction that this was so, that induced Roberts to begin his campaign for National Service. I happened to be in Berlin in 1902, and there made the acquaintance of Major, afterwards General, Balck, of the Great General Staff, who was engaged in the preparation of the official German account of the South African War. He told me that he was in great difficulties, as he could not discover what the British "order of battle" was. The fact, of course, was that we hadn't one; but the precise and orderly German mind could not conceive of a country going to war without a definite organization for its field army. My father was at the time editing our own official history, and I wrote to tell him of the difficulties of the Germans, and to suggest that it would be a friendly act to let them have "states" of our troops at various periods of the war. The Secretary of State for War saw no objection, the information was supplied, and the German General Staff was very grateful. I met Balck after he had digested our returns, and his comment was: "I know now why you took so long to beat the Boers."

Rawlinson's task, then, at head-quarters in shaping an organization was no light one, and it was not made any easier by the fact that the organization of the staff itself was as rudimentary as that of the fighting troops. In the middle of April, Rawlinson wrote: "Girouard[1] has just come up from Cape Town and says that chaos reigns there, chiefly because of the contradictory orders that are sent down from here. I can quite understand that is so, for all departments of head-quarters wire in the name of the Chief of the Staff, usually without consulting each other, and each claims precedence for its own requirements. Kitchener, who is nominally the Chief of the Staff, is nearly always away doing odd jobs where things are going wrong, and there is no one here to pull the machinery together for the Chief. As soon

[1] Now Sir Percy Girouard.

as this war is over we must set about getting a staff system which shall be the same in peace as in war."

However, by the end of April, a force of 44,000 men and 203 guns had been organized for the advance to Pretoria, and, on May 13, Lord Roberts entered Kroonstad. "The Chief ordered that no troops were to enter the town, greatly to the annoyance of Grierson, who is loud in his protests against making our men bivouac, while the Boers are left in their houses. He was even more annoyed when, after the Chief's triumphant entry, we went to find our billets. Johnny had put the Chief into the vicarage and turned out the parson and his wife, saying he would find a tent for them when the transport came in. The Chief, when he arrived, found the couple sitting disconsolately on the steps. He, of course, refused to occupy the house; and so we are out in the open again, which may be a little chilly, but is much healthier than living in a house of doubtful cleanliness, in which I am sure there are numerous bugs."

At Kroonstad another halt occurred to enable the railway to be repaired, and Rawlinson chafed at the delay. "We have got the Boers on the run, and I am sure it is sound policy to keep them moving. We have got enough supplies and transport here to go straight on to the Vaal without waiting for the railway. When we get to the frontier of the Transvaal we might take an easy, if necessary, to let the railway catch us up, but I am anxious about the effect of delay here. To make matters worse, Buller is very obstinate in Natal, and sees all sorts of difficulties in the way of his advance. I fear that he is sore about the Spion Kop dispatch and is sulking. I hear that he gives out that Bobs will not allow him to advance, when we have been doing all we can to get him to move. He is so full of excuses that it has been almost impossible to get any action out of him. With a lot of pushing he has at length occupied Dundee, but he ought to have been over the frontier by now. This delay in Natal has, of course, affected the Chief's plans, and is, I suppose, one of the reasons for halting here; but the delay on both fronts will, I am afraid, mean that the war will go on a long time yet. The enemy will break up into

small parties and take to guerrilla warfare, which it will cost much time and blood to defeat."

The advance from Kroonstad began on May 22, Johannesburg was occupied on May 31, and Pretoria on June 5. While in Pretoria, Rawlinson's work and responsibilities were increased by the departure for China of Grierson, who had been appointed to the staff of the International Force sent to relieve the Legations, beleaguered by the Boxers. While he was sorry to say good-bye to Grierson, he was more than pleased to be able to get his friend Henry Wilson to fill the vacancy in the Quartermaster-General's office. The labours of a staff officer at head-quarters are not of much general interest, and while they continued to be strenuous, there was for some weeks little to disturb their normal course. A fortnight after the occupation of Pretoria, Rawlinson got his first hint of what was in store for him

"*June 14.*—I went out for a walk with the Chief this evening, and had a long talk with him about the future. He does not wish to remain out here any longer than is absolutely necessary, though the Government want him to stay until a civil governor is appointed. We discussed army reform, and when he goes to the War Office he wants me to go with him to help reorganize military education. I cannot imagine a more interesting job."

On the very day of Grierson's departure for China, Rawlinson had one of those disappointments which came to be frequent during the next eighteen months. He had worked out elaborate plans for rounding up de Wet, and on August 16 received this telegram from Lord Kitchener, who was directing operations: "We ran him hard into a corner and fully relied on your closing the door at Olifant's Nek. How was this missed?" "This," wrote Rawlinson, "is the cry of the hound when the fox gets away into an earth that has not been stopped! We did, in fact, order Johnny Hamilton to go to Olifant's Nek, but he found it occupied before he got there and was in a quandary. So de Wet eluded us. This will prolong the war considerably, and we are all very down on our luck in consequence."

The gloom of this failure was relieved a week later when Lord Roberts left Pretoria to direct personally his last cam-

paign in the Western Transvaal. On August 27, Botha was met and defeated at Bergendal, and thereafter the pursuit was continued, without strenuous opposition from the Boers, right up to the border of Portuguese East Africa, at Komati Poort. The weeks which followed Bergendal were strenuous ones for Rawlinson. Warfare had now everywhere become of the guerrilla type, and Lord Roberts decided to put the official seal upon a process which had been developing automatically and to reorganize the forces in South Africa into mobile columns. By the middle of September this reorganization was well advanced, and it became evident that a reorganization of head-quarters must follow. On September 17 Rawlinson wrote: "Buller telegraphed to-day to say that he did not think he was doing any good where he was, and that it was high time that he went home. On this, we persuaded the Chief to wire to Lansdowne[1] that the war having degenerated into guerrilla operations it seemed unnecessary to keep a Field-Marshal as Commander-in-Chief in the field. He added that, if the Government agreed, he was prepared to hand over the command to Buller and to return to England at once. I am inclined to think the Cabinet will agree. They will be anxious to have both Bobs and Kitchener home if they mean to go to the country. Kitchener does not want to leave, but I tell him he will probably be ordered home to ride in the triumph through London. It is a year yesterday since I sailed from Southampton, and I shall not be sorry to be on my way home again."

To this proposal Lord Lansdowne replied that the Government had not sufficient confidence in Buller to leave him to finish up the war, and proposed that Kitchener should remain in command. "The Chief answered," wrote Rawlinson, "that this could easily be arranged. K. must be given the rank of a full general, and was disinclined to take up an appointment at the War Office. He added that in the future K. would best serve the state as Commander-in-Chief in India. I showed this reply to K., who was delighted."

So matters were arranged, and it was decided that Lord

[1] Lord Lansdowne was then Secretary of State for War.

Roberts should sail for England on October 29. But a series of mischances delayed the departure. First Lord Roberts was confined to his bed with an attack of fever. He had hardly recovered when both Prince Christian Victor, one of Lord Roberts's aides-de-camp, and Miss Aileen Roberts[1] took enteric fever, and both were for a time in serious danger. Just when anxiety for the invalids was relieved, the Commander-in-Chief had a nasty fall from his horse. At length, on November 29, Lord Roberts handed over the command to Kitchener, and left for Natal to see his son's grave and the battlefields in that colony. The party sailed from Cape Town on December 11. At the last moment Rawlinson had qualms at leaving. "Just as we were embarking I was handed a wire from K. which ran, 'Good-bye to you all, and the best of wishes. Don't forget those you leave behind.' It made me feel quite choky, when I thought of all the good fellows on the High Veld of South Africa; and, however glad I was to get away from the seat of war for a moment, I was quite inclined to ask Bobs to let me go back to K."

These qualms increased when the ship reached Gibraltar, where Sir George White was now installed as governor. "I had a long talk with Sir George after dinner. There have been several 'regrettable incidents' in South Africa while we have been at sea. K. has still got a stiff job in front of him. Then White told me that Colvile[2] is preparing to fight about his supersession and that the *National Review* has published the telegram he (White) had received from Buller advising him to fire off all his ammunition and make the best terms he could for Ladysmith. This will probably mean that the House will ask for all the papers, and there will be a royal row and endless bickerings. All this is wretched work, more disgusting to me than the horrors of war, and I don't want to be mixed up in it. I am more and more inclined to get back to K."

This being the state of his mind, he received with joy, within three weeks of landing in England, a telegram from Kitchener asking him to come out again and join his staff.

[1] Now Countess Roberts.
[2] The late Lieutenant-General Sir H. Colvile.

LORD ROBERTS AND LORD MILNER, SOUTH AFRICA, 1900

Photograph by Duffus Bros.

"I don't hanker after an office-stool, and so I made up my mind to accept. Lord Bobs agreed to let me go, and though it was a great shock to my wife, she has taken it like a soldier, and I have wired to K. that I would sail on February 16." So by the middle of March, 1901, he was back in Pretoria.

"I have taken over the same duties as I had before, and am living with K. at the Residency. He is in very good form now, but was evidently a bit down in January. He sees that we made a big mistake in talking as if the war was over. He is working out a new system, greatly increasing the number of columns, and fortifying the railway lines with block-houses. The columns will drive from line to line and will find supplies at both ends. This is the right way to deal with guerrillas. K. wants me to complete his scheme. Of course, what I should really like would be to get one of these columns. When I have done this job I will try to drop a hint to him. I had a long talk with him this afternoon, walking up and down in the garden. I gave him all the news from England, and he told me the situation out here. It is distinctly encouraging. He has had quite a satisfactory interview with Botha, who was very open and cordial. He is evidently for peace, but is doubtful if he could persuade the majority of his burghers to accept the terms which K. set forth. Chamberlain, in his reply to K's report, insisted on the addition of certain points which K. thought unnecessary and likely to make Botha's position more difficult. However, he had no option but to send them on to the Boers, and we are waiting their answer. K. is clearly of opinion that, if the Government would leave it to him and Botha, they could arrange peace."

The burghers, partly owing to the influence of Steyn and partly from suspicion of the Government's interpolations, abruptly broke off negotiations, and the war went on.

A fortnight after Botha's reply was received, Rawlinson got what he had been longing for. "This morning before breakfast, as I was showing K. some telegrams, he turned to me in his abrupt way and said: 'You had better go down and take command of Shackleton's column.' Of course, I

jumped at the offer. A force of 1,500 mounted men with six guns and two pom-poms is a very pleasant command, especially when the two subordinate commanders are such good fellows as Cookson[1] and Hickie.[2] I am really in luck and start at 4 p.m. to-day."

The column was operating in the Klerksdorp area of the Western Transvaal, and was under the general direction of Major-General Babington.[3] On April 12, Rawlinson had his first brush with the Boers. "This was my first skirmish on my own. It was a trifling affair. We had no casualties, and I don't know that the Boers had any, but I must say I enjoyed it. It is such a blessing to be able to do what one wants, instead of recommending someone else to do it. There are Boers in front of us in a strong position, and I went to see Babington and arrange plans."

The plans resulted in a thrilling experience. Rawlinson's column was to make a night march to Kaffirs' Kraal near Brakpan. "Just as it was getting light Babington told me to push on and take Kaffirs' Kraal if I could. This I did, and surprised and captured a Boer outpost of six men in the kraal. I saw there was no one on the hill to the south-west and, as it was obviously the key to the position, I sent Cookson off to seize it, leaving Gosset to support his right rear. Cookson got the hill by 7 a.m. without firing a shot, and I then went on to join him. As I got to the top of the hill I was met by an orderly, who told me there was a Boer laager just over the hill, and that the guns were wanted. I got them up as quickly as possible, and then heard heavy firing to my right, which meant that Gosset was engaged. Sending to Gosset to tell him to draw in towards Cookson, I galloped on after the latter, and on arriving on the scene of action I found he had galloped into the Boer laager and captured a 12-pounder gun and a pom-pom. My troops were now a bit scattered, and I spent some time getting them together. It was not till after noon that Gosset was able to rejoin me. We were then extended on the ridge above the laager, when some 200 Boers, who had heard the firing, crept up to within 500 yards of the guns. I had sent a party

[1] Colonel G. A. Cookson. [2] Now Major-General Sir W. Hickie.
[3] Now Lieutenant-General Sir J. M. Babington.

of Kitchener's Horse to hold the southern edge of the hill, and, feeling anxious that they should be in the right place, I rode over to see where they were. A few heads were visible above the grass, and I rode up to them, thinking they were my men, just where I wanted them to be. What was my surprise when I found, on getting within 20 yards of them, that they were Boers. Two men jumped up from the grass with their rifles at the present, shouting 'Hands up.' I at once turned and bolted. They fired and hit my horse, which rolled over, leaving me sprawling on the ground. The two Boers came up, and, my revolver being on my saddle, I was forced to surrender. They demanded my watch and my haversack, but as the watch had only cost me twenty-five bob it was no great loss. They then asked me for my money, and I gave them five shillings. All this I did as slowly as possible, for I knew that my men were well round them, and there would shortly be a scrimmage. Sure enough, just as one of them had got on my horse, bang went one of our 12-pounders. Away went Mr. Dutchman as fast as my wounded horse would take him. I then walked back to the guns, which had been firing in two directions at one time, to drive off the Boers who had got round them, and I was heartily congratulated on my escape. It was quite a good show, for we got, besides the guns, 25 Boer prisoners, ten wagons, 2,500 sheep, 500 cattle; and our own casualties were only three slightly wounded. It was a hard day, and I was very tired at the end of it, but it was a great experience."

This was one of the exciting days of the guerrilla war, but such were rare. Much weary trekking with little result, varied by halts on the railway to refit, was the normal experience, and it was not until July 28 that Rawlinson had another action. He was then in the Vereeniging district north of the Vaal, and on coming unexpectedly upon a party of Boers in a position which he judged to be of no great strength, decided to gallop at it under cover of his artillery. The Boers fled, and in the pursuit 18 prisoners, 70 horses, 24 wagons, and a quantity of sheep and cattle were captured. In the wagons was found some of Smuts's correspondence. These having given some inkling of

Smuts's plans, Rawlinson's column was moved into the Orange River Colony, where during August he was engaged in what he described as a number of "useless processions." In September he took part in a more elaborate attempt to round up Smuts, which that wily commander evaded by slipping across the Orange River into Cape Colony just at the right moment. As soon as this was known, Rawlinson's column was railed northwards, and it spent October trekking in the Eastern Transvaal, where it took its full share of prisoners and booty. "I expect," wrote Rawlinson, at the end of October, "this guerrilla business will go on at least another six months, by which time there won't be much of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony which I shall not know." At that time his column had marched more than 2,500 miles since he had assumed command.

November, 1901, was a comparatively quiet month in the Eastern Transvaal, the columns being employed only in occasional raids, pending the completion in that part of the country of Lord Kitchener's system of block-houses. That done, an extensive and energetic drive was planned under the direction of General Bruce Hamilton. Here are two descriptions of typical days, or rather nights and days, in that adventure:

"*December 4.*—We had information that a big commando with a number of carts and wagons had gone south-east during the night of the 2nd–3rd, so we marched off at 6.45 p.m. We shoved on well during the night, and just as it was getting light, information came in that the Boers, quite unsuspicious of our approach, were laagered just beyond the hill in front of us. We topped the ridge at exactly 3.42 a.m., and, sure enough, found a laager 400 yards below us. Bruce Hamilton, who was with me, made me open on it with a pom-pom, which was, I think, a mistake, as it gave our presence away to other laagers which were in the vicinity, though we did not know that at the time. After a few rounds from the pom-pom I started galloping, sending the 2nd M.I. and Roberts's Horse away to the right, and going myself with the guns, 8th M.I. and Yeomen, after a party of Boers we could see retiring over the hill to our left. I

went very fast for about three miles and, on topping a rise, saw a stock farm below me. There were numbers of cattle and horses about, and we could see men driving them towards us. I was for a moment uncertain whether the men did not come from one of our columns, but then I spotted an ox-wagon being driven off as fast as it could go, and I tumbled to the fact that they were Boers who were inspanning. So I went for them at once, Gosset's 8th M.I. going like real good 'uns. We captured all the wagons, about 120 horses, 25 prisoners, and a heap of rifles. Altogether the day's drive produced 91 prisoners, 101 rifles, 60 wagons, and a large number of horses, cattle and sheep. So we did well and were very pleased with ourselves."

"*December 10.*—Wools-Sampson got us information that Piet Viljoen with all his lot intended moving round our left flank to join Britz in the Vaal. They have got one of the guns captured from Benson with them. My horses were fresh after two days' rest, and I meant to have that gun. We started off at 6.30 p.m. as light as possible. The night was very dark and, to add to our trouble, a tremendous thunderstorm came on, the lightning playing all round us. But long practice has accustomed us all to the difficulties of night marching, and the column kept touch and direction very well. Bruce Hamilton pushed us on fast, rather too fast, some of us thought, considering how dark it was, but, as it turned out, he was quite right. We did just thirty miles in 8½ hours, pretty good going considering the darkness. About 3.30 a.m., Wools-Sampson's boys came in with the news that the Boers were all there. A tremor of excitement ran through us all, and I deployed quickly. About 3.45 a.m., just as it was getting light, we trotted on, and as we came over the rise there lay the whole Boer laager at our feet only some 800 yards away. The M.I. let out a cheer and whoo-hoop which must have been a rude awakening for the Boers. A few odd shots, the whizz of one or two bullets, and the whole of our team of over 2,000 mounted men were off at a gallop, yelling with delight. They never stopped to shoot, and the more the Boers fired the louder our fellows yelled. My orders were that there was to be no halt at the laager, no looting of wagons, no

stopping to shoot. We were to go straight for the mounted Boers and the gun, which we knew was with them.

"I have never seen a more exhilarating sight than that grey dawn disclosed. The M.I. were streaming away like a good pack of hounds in full cry, each man knowing his job and how to do it. The British soldier can learn anything if he is properly taught.

"We had a long gallop of nearly seven miles, but were rewarded by securing 53 prisoners to our own cheek. Only six got away. We killed four Boers, and our only casualty was an officer of the 8th M.I. slightly hit in the leg. The only fly in the ointment was that they got Benson's gun away somehow. I don't know how they managed it; I never saw it. When we got back to the laager we found that 67 more prisoners had been taken. Bruce Hamilton ran the drive splendidly, and Wools-Sampson deserves the utmost credit for his information, which was absolutely correct, and for the way he led us through the dark."

The fly did not remain long in the ointment, for, three days later, another long night march was followed by the third successful surprise of a Boer laager, within ten days. This time 86 prisoners and Benson's coveted gun were taken. This system of drives, continued throughout December into January, 1902, under General Bruce Hamilton's vigorous leadership, succeeded in dispersing effectively the Boers in the Eastern Transvaal, and on Christmas Day Rawlinson noted: "The Boers are not fighting as they did. Their prisoners are many and dispirited. I don't think they can go on much longer. We had quite a cheery Christmas after our successes."

Rawlinson had now won the reputation of being one of the most successful and energetic of the younger column commanders, and as there were other parts where things had not been going quite so well as in the Eastern Transvaal, Kitchener, at the beginning of the year, called him in to head-quarters preparatory to sending him to another field.

On reaching Johannesburg he learned that de Wet was again on the rampage in the Orange River Colony, and had inflicted a severe reverse on us near Bethlehem. This gave him some inkling of his next task. Before setting out on

it, he was glad to have opportunities of talk with those who could look on the situation in the theatre of war as a whole.

"*Johannesburg, January 2.*—A few days' rest here is doing me a world of good, and I am having a very interesting time, for I have had opportunities for long talks with K., Solomon, the Attorney-General, and others who are in a position to review the whole state of affairs. Solomon is very shrewd and has an intimate knowledge of the past and present of South Africa. We had a long discussion on the future of the country. He agrees with me that as long as our policy is unconditional surrender and a Crown Colony government for six or seven years, we shall never get real peace. It will take us six months to hunt down the few Boers who remain in the field and, that done, where are we? We will have 50,000 prisoners on our hands, who will conspire and plot the moment they are let loose. My conviction is that, unless we come to terms with the Boers and promise them some sort of representative government within a reasonable time, we shall never have real peace. We could, of course, hold the country and continue to develop the gold and other industries under armed protection; but we shall never rule the country until we have representative Boer institutions. Johannesburg is going to be a powerful influence, not only in South Africa but in the Empire generally, and we shall need some counterpoise to the gold ring. I am surprised that Milner does not see this. It is he who will have to govern out here. He should be the arbiter out here between Briton and Boer. But he has so committed himself to the Johannesburgers that his views are biased, and the Boers hate him more than any other living being except, perhaps, Joe Chamberlain. So I do not think he will ever be the High Commissioner of a peaceful confederation of South African States.

"K. has been very nice to me and very complimentary. He is going to take me away from Bruce Hamilton, and give me a big column of 2,000 men to hunt de Wet in the Orange River Colony. I asked to be allowed to keep my two dear old M.I. battalions, and he has agreed. I am to have, in addition, the Imperial Light Horse and Dawkins's column, so altogether my paper strength will be 2,400

mounted men, 6 guns, and 8 pom-poms. I am going up in the world. We are to make de Wet and Steyn our objective, and harry the country between Vrede and Harrismith, which is, I understand, not a very easy district. There will be three other columns of about the same strength, under Byng, Elliott, and Remington, two of which will be always on the warpath, while the other two are resting."

This plan, begun in the latter part of January and prosecuted throughout February, ended in a great success. True, de Wet managed to escape to join De la Rey, taking with him the sickly and enfeebled Steyn, but he had no following. His men were either dispersed or captured. The methods which brought this about were very similar to those employed in the Eastern Transvaal, though on a larger scale; they need not again be described.

On February 27, Rawlinson reaped the reward of six weeks' patient and continuous work, and that night wrote: "This has been a great day. We had hemmed in the greater part of de Wet's commando, and this morning they sent in to negotiate a surrender. I allowed them to keep their blankets and personal belongings, but required them to lay down their arms unconditionally. 648 surrendered with their arms, and we took 40,700 rounds of rifle ammunition, besides quantities of horses and cattle and large numbers of carts and wagons; a very satisfactory celebration of the relief of Ladysmith. Altogether this month my columns have killed 10 Boers, taken 12 wounded and 767 unwounded prisoners, which I think is a record for any column. I can't hope to beat it next month."

The success was decisive of events in the north-east of the Orange River Colony, but it had hardly been won when the flame of war again flared up elsewhere. On March 7, De la Rey defeated Lord Methuen's column at Tweebosch in the Western Transvaal, Lord Methuen himself falling from his wounded horse and fracturing his thigh. His chivalrous captor had sent him in to Klerksdorp for treatment; but the event was ominous, and unless promptly met might mean the indefinite prolongation of a struggle which, until it occurred, appeared to be drawing to its close. The

reputation of Rawlinson's column now stood very high with the Commander-in-Chief, and he promptly moved it to Klerksdorp to take part in a great drive, which he had planned to clear the Western Transvaal. "It is hard on my men," wrote Rawlinson, "for they badly want a rest, but it must be done."

The column reached Klerksdorp on March 19 and, on arriving there, Rawlinson found a message summoning him to head-quarters for consultation as to future plans. There he once more met his old friend, now Sir Ian Hamilton, who had come out again some time previously to be Chief of the Staff to Lord Kitchener. On his way back to Klerksdorp, Rawlinson stopped for a night in Johannesburg and there wrote, on March 27: "It was a real pleasure to have a talk with Johnny again. He is very fit and full of work. He says the Boer leaders are engaged in conversations, and he thinks something definite will come of it soon. The impression at head-quarters is that Milner is in no hurry to finish the war, and will hold out for absolutely unconditional surrender, and Crown Colony government. To-night I sat next to Milner at dinner, and had a chance of hearing his point of view. It appears that he does not think that he will be able to govern South Africa satisfactorily unless he can get Crown Colony government for Cape Colony, but Joe Chamberlain does not think there is any chance of this being accepted by the House of Commons. His view is that, if there is representative government in the Cape Colony, it will be impossible to prevent arms and ammunition from being smuggled into the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, and this would mean constant rebellions. Milner is prepared to agree to an amnesty, and probably most of the other terms for which the Boers will ask, if he can get Crown Colony government for the whole of South Africa. He does not anticipate any difficulty in ruling the Boers if he can have this. He says, if we don't do this, South Africa will be just such another ulcer to us as Spain was to Napoleon. It was very interesting to hear him talk, and I quite see that, now Rhodes is dead, it may be very difficult, if not impossible, to find a prime minister for the Cape who would govern in the

interests of the Empire; but I still think that K. is right, and that we must remember that we shall have to live with the Boers after the war. Crown Colony government will probably be necessary during the period of reconstruction, but we ought to tell the Boers that we will give them representative institutions as soon as they settle down and behave themselves."

By the first week of April, 1902, all was ready for what proved to be the last campaign of the war. On April 7, Sir Ian Hamilton arrived at Klerksdorp to direct the drive which began the next day. On April 11, De la Rey's commandos were met and defeated at Rooival in a sharp fight, in which Rawlinson's command was not heavily engaged. De la Rey was himself absent, being at Pretoria with the Boer leaders who had begun peace negotiations, and the news of the defeat of the force which he had trained and gallantly led, had an important influence upon the issue. When the pursuit after Rooival was ended, the columns were halted and re-formed, preparatory to a great drive westwards, still under Sir Ian Hamilton's direction. This resulted, on May 11, in the surrender of the remnant of De la Rey's men and, on May 17, the columns returned to their bases. A fortnight later peace was signed.

"*June 1.*—I was a little late for church parade this morning, and was hurrying along, when the telegraph clerk came running after me with the broadest of grins on his face. I had my suspicions as I tore open the envelope, but none the less a thrill ran through me, the like of which I have never experienced before, as I read the words, 'Peace was signed last night.—Chief.' So here's the end of our labours, thank God.

"I kept the telegram in my hand until service was over, when I formed up the troops, and announced the glad tidings, congratulating them on the successful result of all their hard work. I told them not to forget the good friends we had lost, and finished by calling for three cheers for K. I think the Imperial Light Horse were the only men who did not rejoice that the war was over. Poor beggars, few of them know where and when they will get a job. I must set to work to see what I can do for them.

"*June 10.*—To-day I said good-bye to my dear old 2nd and 8th M.I., who have been with me all the time. I summed up what we had done together. Since I took over command on April 1, 1901, we have marched 5,211 miles, and we have halted in 276 camps. The casualties we have inflicted on the Boers come to 64 killed, and 87 wounded. We have taken 1,376 prisoners, 3 guns, 1,082 rifles, and 68,600 rounds of ammunition. There have been no regrettable incidents, and our own casualties have been 12 killed and 42 wounded. That is a record of which we may all be proud."

He received an invitation from Lord Kitchener to accompany him home, and embarked on the *Orotava* at Cape Town on June 23. On the voyage home he reflected on his experiences: "The future of South Africa interests me enormously, and I wish I could take a hand in its development, but my destinies call me elsewhere. I am still absolutely convinced that prosperity depends upon whether we can get Briton and Boer to work together. If that comes to pass, prosperity is, I think, certain, for South Africa has an admirable climate and unlimited resources. Johannesburg remains the chief problem. It is controlled by a cosmopolitan ring, which hangs on to British influence, because London is the easiest market in which to float companies. For the rest of the country, few of them care. The hope is that in the next few years there will be an influx of thinking men into the Transvaal, who will change the spirit of money grubbing, and they may perhaps be able to guide the flow of capital into more permanent channels of development, such as farming, irrigation, railways, coal and iron. It is in these, not in gold, that the true wealth of the Transvaal lies, and it is on them that the prosperity of the country a hundred years hence will depend.

"As to the army, we have much to do. I have jotted down what I consider to be the military lessons of the war. Here they are:

1. The volunteer soldier fights, in my opinion, far better than the conscript, and I think we ought to stick to voluntary enlistment, provided that we can obtain the necessary number of men.

2. We must have means of expansion, and should take much more trouble with the training of the Militia and Volunteers.
3. We must have a properly organized staff system.
4. Military education is essential to all commanders. Our theoretical education must have more practical aims than it has had in the past, and must be available for Militia and Volunteer commanders.
5. Mounted riflemen and cavalry trained to fight on foot will become more and more valuable as weapons increase in range and power; but infantry remains the only arm that can decide the issue of battle.
6. We must train our infantry to shoot better and faster, and should give them well-equipped machine-gun companies.
7. We must have better co-operation between our infantry and artillery.
8. The control of battle by a commander is becoming more and more difficult. Therefore subordinates must be trained to accept responsibility and use it properly. Study of ground is of prime importance.
9. The moment when a battle seems to be lost is the moment to refuse to accept defeat and to attack with every available man and gun.

"I hope to be able to make some use of these ideas when I get to the War Office. I have been very lucky, but I think I can honestly say that I have done my best to deserve my luck. With a brevet colonelcy and a C.B. at the age of 38, I am very well placed, and I may have some influence in getting my ideas, which I am sure are sound, adopted at head-quarters."

He was much interested and delighted with the tumultuous enthusiasm of Lord Kitchener's reception; "but the chief joy for me was to find my little wife really well and strong."

King Edward was still in bed recovering from his operation, and Lord Kitchener and his party were received by the Prince of Wales at St. James's Palace.

"After lunch, K. went off straight to Buckingham Palace to see the King, who was in bed. When he was ushered into the royal presence, the King fished out the new Order of Merit from under his pillow and presented it to Kitchener, who was delighted, as he is the first recipient of it. To this brilliant termination three years of strenuous campaigning have brought us safe and sound."

CHAPTER V

THE STAFF COLLEGE: ALDERSHOT: SALISBURY PLAIN

AFTER some weeks of pleasant holiday, Rawlinson began to wonder where he would find a niche in the many schemes for army reform which were in the air. Mr. Brodrick had introduced his programme of organization of the army at home into army corps, which met with a somewhat mixed reception. Rawlinson was not enthusiastic. "Brodrick's army corps are mostly on paper, and seem to me to require far too large a staff for the number of troops who really exist. He has begun at the wrong end of the stick. We should create a real general staff first, and leave them to work out an organization for peace and war. Bobs tells me that he has something in his mind for me, but I have not any idea what it is."

While he was waiting for employment, there came to him an invitation which he was delighted to accept. Lord Kitchener had gone out to India as Commander-in-Chief, and he wrote to invite Rawlinson and his wife to come to Delhi as his guests for the Durbar, which was to celebrate King Edward's coronation.

The chance of being able to show his wife something of the splendours of Eastern ceremonial, and of the country in which he had begun his military career, was more than welcome, and the couple sailed from England on December 2, 1902, reaching Delhi just before Christmas Day. The ceremonies of the Durbar have often been described, and Rawlinson's impressions of them were those of most visitors. Of more interest is his picture of Lord Kitchener in his new position.

"K. looks very fit after his army manœuvres, which have just ended. He was not much impressed with them. I have had long talks with him about the army in India. He has made up his mind to go slowly and to see everything

before introducing reforms; but I gather that he has already sketched out in his mind what he means to do. He says that the organization of the army is all higgledy-piggledy, and has no relation to what it may have to do in war. There is a rigid, narrow bureaucratic system, which he means to break down, and he groans over the number of minutes which he has to read and write. He will have a stiff job, for many of the older officers of the Indian Army will oppose him tooth and nail; but he will get support from the younger men, who are well up in their professional duties and see what he is aiming at. He told me that he has already discovered that there is in the Indian Army, generally, even less of a professional spirit than there is in the army at home, which is saying a good deal. He thinks that the material is admirable, but is being thrown away by bad organization, and that there is an immense waste of money on things that are not essential. I think Curzon means to let him have a free hand with the army and, if so, they will get on well."

Rawlinson's prophecy that the relations between the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy would be happy was, as is well known, not fulfilled, for the two fell out over the question of the status and authority of the military member of Council, an officer junior in status to the Commander-in-Chief, who yet could, and frequently did, oppose purely military proposals. The prophecy was based on an incident which occurred during the Durbar. It happened that, in 1902, an Indian servant met his death in the lines of the 9th Lancers during some festivities, in which there was some horse-play. The evidence obtainable was purely circumstantial, and the court of inquiry into the affair was unable to fix responsibility. The case was not very happily handled by the general who forwarded the report of the inquiry, and Lord Curzon insisted that the 9th Lancers should be punished. This roused considerable feeling in the British community, and Lord Curzon was supposed invariably to take the side of the Indian when he came into conflict with the white man. The rest of the story Rawlinson shall tell himself.

"The squadron told off as escort to the Duke and

Duchess of Connaught came from the 9th Lancers, and it got very nearly as enthusiastic a reception as their Royal Highnesses. The Press hinted broadly that K. had done this on purpose to show his disapproval of Curzon's action. As a matter of fact, K. knew nothing whatever about it. At the big review all the regiments were well received by the crowd as they marched past, but when the 9th Lancers came by there were a few hisses from the natives, which were promptly drowned in such an outburst of enthusiasm as must have made Curzon feel very uncomfortable. The two big stands, which were full of visitors and soldiers, cheered the 9th so vociferously that, as K. told me afterwards, he very nearly turned round and ordered them to be quiet. In the evening, after the review, he went over to see Curzon, and he told us at dinner that evening how neatly the Viceroy had dealt with the incident. In the course of conversation, Curzon remarked that there was only one thing in the review which he had regretted. 'Yes,' said K., 'that business about the 9th Lancers was certainly in bad taste.' 'Oh,' answered Curzon, 'I was not thinking of that at all. What I felt was that in receiving all the salutes of those splendid troops I was doing what you should by right have done.' Curzon must have chuckled at the opportunity K. gave him, and the affair argues well for their future relations.

"I gather that Smith-Dorrien is not very happy as Adjutant-General. He dislikes minute-writing even more than does K., and he will probably before long get a first-class district.[1] In that case, K. will probably make Duff his Adjutant-General, and I should like to take Duff's place and help K. in his reforms. I mentioned this to K., but he said that Lord Bobs had forbidden him to take me, which is rather hard, as he has not found a job for me at home yet. I have been immensely interested to see K. in these new surroundings. He has taken to all the ceremonies like a duck to water, and looks a splendid figure of a man on his horse, on parade, or at a full-dress function in the evening. He is a perfect host, and takes endless pains to see that his guests are comfortable. It was a sight for

[1] Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien was not long after this appointed to the Quetta command.

sore eyes to see him footing it with the best of them in the royal quadrille at the state ball. After the supper, the Viceroy collected his most distinguished guests in the Dewan-i-Kas, and I shall never forget that sight. There were gathered together, Curzon with his lady, in a lovely gold-embroidered dress, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Duchesses of Portland and Marlborough, and a raja or two, and K., even in the midst of those splendid women and gorgeous Eastern potentates, was the most impressive figure of the lot. The competition has been severe, for Curzon does these things in the grand manner, but K. keeps his end up well. The ladies of Delhi are full of apprehension, for they have never conceived of the possibility of a bachelor Commander-in-Chief, and they are wondering what will happen when they get to Simla. They need have no fears; K. means to do them well, and I am sure he will."

After a tour to show his wife some of the glories of India, Rawlinson sailed from Bombay at the end of January, and on his arrival home he learned at last what Lord Roberts had in store for him. He was to be Assistant-Adjutant-General, in the new department of military education and training at the War Office, which the Commander-in-Chief had created to take the place of the former Director of Military Education. This post he took up in April, 1903, his immediate chief being General Hildyard, and his immediate subordinate Henry Wilson. The two friends were soon immersed in schemes for making military education and training more practical, and in preparing plans for army manœuvres. But Rawlinson's first experience of the War Office was not altogether happy, and in October he wrote: "This is a terrible place. There are far too many cooks concerned with every brew of broth, and the result is that it takes an unconscionable time to get anything through. Even when the bigwigs here are at length induced to approve a plan, it is ten to one, if any money is involved, that the Treasury knocks it on the head. I have never worked harder for six months with less result than I have here." He was then delighted when, a few weeks later, he learned that Lord Roberts had appointed him to

be Commandant at the Staff College, with the rank of brigadier-general.

Rawlinson's arrival at the Staff College was happily timed both for himself and the college. Lord Wolseley had worked strenuously, against much opposition, to give the college the place in the estimation of the army which it ought to have held from the first. The fillip which the South African War had given to the development of the professional spirit in the army completed Wolseley's work. Henderson's brilliant teaching had been an inspiration to many who had made their reputation in South Africa, and when the army realized that the great majority of the coming men, such as Haig, Allenby, Smith-Dorrien, Grierson, Robertson and the new commandant himself, were not only graduates of the college, but openly confessed what they owed to it, the keen and the ambitious sought admission in ever-increasing numbers. In Rawlinson's first year there were one hundred and one candidates for twenty-four competitive vacancies, a number which, if small in comparison with those of the present day, was much larger than it had been before the South African War. Attempts to broaden the course of instruction at the college, and to make it more practical, had been slow to take effect, because of the fear that the changes would not increase the popularity of the college with the army. But, in 1904, the time was ripe for progress, and Rawlinson was the very man to give it a push. He was known not only to be an admirable staff officer in peace and war, but an energetic and capable leader in the field. Of hardly less importance for the reputation of the college with the army generally, was his prowess as a sportsman. No one could accuse him of being a theoretical bookworm. He could, therefore, proceed boldly to sweep away the last remnants of pedantry which clung to the college.

Always ready to take responsibility, he welcomed as heartily his appointment to a position in which he could do much without constant reference to others, as he had welcomed, for the same reason, the command of a column in South Africa. If he had not much enjoyed his experience at the War Office, the few months which he spent there

were invaluable, for they taught him what strings to pull, when he wanted changes made which he could not bring about on his own authority, and it taught him, also, what changes were possible and what were not; while he had in Henry Wilson, an invaluable ally at head-quarters. He was singularly fortunate in his staff, which included Haking,[1] Capper,[2] Kiggell,[3] Hubert Gough,[4] du Cane,[5] Stopford,[6] and Aston.[7] One of the first changes he succeeded in bringing about was the abolition of the title of professor—a relic of the old days, when a considerable proportion of the teachers were civilians and the curriculum comprised the study of many subjects which had but a remote connection with war. The title of Directing Staff gave the place a less academic air. A further change in the same direction was a drastic reduction in the number and importance of examinations. Under the old system the examiners, who were not always in the closest touch with military developments, necessarily exercised great influence over the course of instruction. Rawlinson paid little or no attention to the results of examinations, and developed instead the method, which has since been followed, of reliance upon personal acquaintance with the students, and with their work, in estimating their capabilities.

Ever since his first visit to the Mediterranean, Rawlinson had had in mind the need for closer co-operation between the army and navy. Having on his staff Aston, the first Marine officer to be a teacher at the Staff College, Rawlinson brought about a meeting at his club between Aston, Henry Wilson, and Admiral Slade, then head of the Naval War College, and arranged, over a glass of port, for two naval officers to come to the Staff College as students. The study of combined naval and military operations was taken up seriously, and has ever since had an important place in the curriculum at Camberley. Indeed, the chief feature of Rawlinson's rule of the college was that he succeeded in impressing on it indelibly something of his own practical spirit. From a groundwork of theory the students

[1] Now General Sir R. Haking.
[2] The late Major-General Sir T. Capper.
[3] Now Lieutenant-General Sir L. Kiggell.
[4] Now General Sir H. Gough.
[5] Now General Sir J. P. du Cane.
[6] Now Major-General Sir L. Stopford.
[7] Now Major-General Sir G. Aston.

were led on to the examination of existing and potential military problems, and this gave to their studies an actuality which had previously been lacking. Rawlinson was fortunate in that the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War coincided with the introduction of this method, and the regular study of a great war actually in progress gave point to the textbook study of previous wars. The problems of the North-West frontier of India, and of another Franco-German War in which we might be involved, gave the students an insight into questions which were, in fact, to confront many of them. Amongst those who passed through his hands, and have since greatly distinguished themselves in the service of their country, were Montgomery,[1] Butler,[2] Thwaites,[3] Anderson,[4] Radcliffe,[5] J. Gough,[6] Burnett Stuart,[7] Cobbe,[8] and the present commandant of the college.[9]

In June, 1905, King Edward VII paid a visit to the college, being the first sovereign to inspect the place, and Rawlinson presented to him five V.C.s from the body of the students, one of them being the late Sir John Gough, who was then being taught by, among others, his younger brother Hubert.

Not long after Rawlinson arrived at Camberley, the Esher Commission made its report, and the government of the army was confided to the Army Council. Mr. H. O. Arnold-Forster succeeded Mr. Brodrick as Secretary of War; the Royal Commission on the South African War, and the Duke of Norfolk's Commission, issued their reports. The army was in the melting-pot, and Rawlinson was kept busy with correspondence, particularly with Henry Wilson, on the many proposals for change which appeared and disappeared. The two friends were agreed that the right way to begin was with the establishment of an effective staff system, and both were engaged in working out a scheme for a British General Staff. The scheme was eventually promulgated in September, 1906, though not quite in the

[1] Now Lieut.-General Sir A. Montgomery-Massingberd.
[2] Now Lieut.-General Sir R.H.K. Butler.
[3] Now Lieut.-General Sir W. Thwaites.
[4] Now Lieut.-General Sir H. Anderson.
[5] Now Lieut.-General Sir P. de B. Radcliffe.
[6] The late Colonel Sir J. Gough, V.C.
[7] Now Major-General Sir J. Burnett-Stuart.
[8] Now General Sir A. Cobbe, V.C.
[9] Major-General C. Gwynn.

form which Rawlinson had proposed. Still, he welcomed it as "the best thing we have done since the South African War."

He never lost an opportunity of trying to convince his friends of the importance of paying more attention to the Volunteers. Most of the expert witnesses before the Norfolk Commission had insisted that it would take from one and a half to two years to train the Volunteers to a standard fitting them to take their place in the field in a modern war. "I don't agree at all with this," wrote Rawlinson. "There is splendid material in the Volunteers, and a far higher level of intelligence than we have in the Regular army. If we took them more seriously, we should get better material still. We ought to give them two good Regular officers to each battalion, increase their facilities for training, and give them modern equipment, and then I am certain they would be ready to fight in six months." Finding, as the probability of war with Germany increased, that he could get little support for his views, he changed his mind on the merits of voluntary service, and became as active a supporter as it was possible for an officer on full pay to be of Lord Robert's campaign for National Service.

During 1904, Lord Kitchener was planning a Staff College for India, which was to be as exact a replica as possible of the parent institution. Up to, and after, the creating of the new college, which opened temporarily at Deolali in March, 1905, Rawlinson was in constant correspondence with his old chief, giving him every possible help in a task which he cordially approved. In the winter vacation of 1905, he went out at Kitchener's invitation to see the offspring of Camberley, and to present to it from the college a replica of the silver owl which had long adorned its mess table. He then had another talk with Kitchener about his plans for the Indian army. "K's schemes are big, and involve nothing less than a complete redistribution of the army. It is a costly business, and he is meeting much opposition from the financiers. In order to frighten the politicians into acquiescence he has been running a big war game to show how Russia would and could invade India. I gather that he has brought the Tsar's army into Delhi

before any substantial help could come out from home. I told him that he would take a fall over this if he did not look out, for we had been working at the same scheme at Camberley, and had proved that it was practically impossible for Russia to get a large army across Afghanistan into India. He was angry about this, and said I ought to have told him; but I countered by saying that he should have told me what he was up to. He means to stick to his guns, and I wish him all luck, for his plans, if he brings them off, will be a great thing for India. He has quite recovered from his accident,[1] though he still feels his leg now and then. Personally, I did not expect that he would defeat Curzon over the military member, and, having done that, he may achieve anything. He will have a much easier task in dealing with Minto. The new Staff College has started well. K. hopes to move it to Quetta next year."

Kitchener understood better than Rawlinson with whom he had to deal. Sir William Robertson tells us of the effect which the records of the war game had in London:

"The arrival of the 'proceedings' created some excitement in Whitehall, where they were apparently regarded as affording infallible proof of what Russia could actually do, and undeniable evidence that we (the War Office) had been terribly out in the calculations we had made. They found their way to me for examination, and I had to explain that a war game was by no means the same thing as war, and that some of the assumptions made in the game were quite untenable . . . but the game probably went a long way towards fulfilling Lord Kitchener's real purpose, which was to obtain early sanction for the reforms he was advocating."[2]

The lesson was not lost on Rawlinson, when he later on had to deal with similar problems.

Rawlinson's three years at the college were very happy. He felt that he was doing good work of a kind that appealed to him, and he had plenty of opportunities for the sort of recreation which he liked best. He was very much younger than any of his predecessors, and was able to join

[1] Lord Kitchener had broken his leg in a fall from his horse.

[2] Robertson, "From Private to Field-Marshal," p. 136.

the students in play as in work. He was, indeed, but a few years older than the mass of senior students, and younger than most of his staff. As usual he took pains to be well mounted, and rode hard and regularly with the college drag. He played polo on the ground at Wellington College, and at Aldershot, and thoroughly enjoyed the official hospitalities both of the college and of Commandant's House, where he and his wife were famous hosts. His record at the college was, then, in every way memorable, and is suitably recorded by the attachment of his name to one of its chief halls, now decorated with his portrait, and with many of his trophies of war and the chase, to which has recently been added a handsome bookcase, the memorial to him of his Fourth Army, containing the records of the doings of that army in the Great War.

In November, 1906, Rawlinson learned that he was to get command of the 2nd Infantry Brigade at Aldershot in the following March, and in December he handed over charge of the Staff College to Henry Wilson. Immediately after Christmas, he left England for a short trip to Canada, to examine some business propositions which had been put to him. He was greatly struck with the opportunities which Canada presented, and wrote from Ottawa, where he had been staying with the Governor-General, Lord Grey: "I have been much tempted to join Arthur Grenfell in his enterprise out here. I am sure there is money in it, and, besides, the development of the white portions of the Empire has always had a fascination for me, and I believe firmly that in that direction lies the future of the British race. I will remain in the army at any rate until I am promoted major-general, which should be in the course of the next two years, and I shall then consider seriously going into business in Canada. The era of small wars is over, and the only war that I foresee in my life is a life and death struggle either with Russia or Germany. In either event, we should want every man we can lay our hands on, and I should be just as well placed in the Militia or Volunteers as in the Regular army. I must talk it over with Merrie[1] and we will see what the next year brings forth."

[1] Lady Rawlinson.

The idea remained in his mind for some time, and at the beginning of 1909, he again crossed the Atlantic. By then he had decided to confine his interests in Canada to investments, and he took the opportunity of a visit, planned to enable him to look into these, to see something of the Canadian forces. "I had a long talk with Lake[1] about Canadian military affairs in general. He tells me that they could turn out 60,000 men fairly well equipped in a fortnight, but that they are short of field artillery. This is considerably more than I had supposed, and I believe that, if we have to fight Germany, we could get a reinforcement from Canada quicker than from anywhere else. It would pay us then to help her make up her equipment to modern standards.

"I was a good deal impressed by the organization of the Militia. Their armouries are fine and well equipped. They correspond to our Volunteer drill-halls, but are much better. Every man has a locker for his rifle and equipment, which is ready for instant issue on embodiment. The men are excellent, and there is a high proportion of keen, intelligent officers, who are used to fending for themselves, and have plenty of enterprise. I believe that with two months' intensive training after embodiment, the Canadian Militia would be fit to face European troops. The trouble would be with the generals, for in their appointment political influence is likely to have more weight than military efficiency. But I don't think that trouble would last long, for the men are independent and outspoken, and they won't stand being murdered by incompetents."

At a dinner given by Sir F. Borden at Ottawa, and at a luncheon given by the Canadian Club of Montreal, Rawlinson made speeches, explaining the organization of the new General Staff, and expounding Lord Roberts's scheme of National Service. Both were very well received, and he left Montreal for New York, "feeling that the potential military resources of the British Empire are much greater than I had supposed."

In New York and Washington he had opportunities of examining the State Militia system of the United States. A visit to West Point impressed him, as it does most foreign

[1] Now General Sir P. Lake. Then Inspector-General of Canadian Forces.

military visitors. At Washington he met General Crozier, then Chief of Ordnance of the United States Army, and had a long talk with him about military administration. "I gather that their War Department suffers from much the same maladies as our War Office. They are, I suppose, inherent in the administration of a voluntary army in a democratic country. Money is wasted on non-essential things, because they are popular, and is hard to get for military necessities. But we might well adapt some things from their State Militia system to our Volunteers. The States are much more independent than our counties, have more interest in their Militia and more power to encourage its development. But the War Department does a good deal more for the Militia than our War Office does for the Volunteers. Those armouries which I saw are very well organized. They have more and better horses at their disposal, and better equipment generally than our Volunteers. I will get the War Office to call for a full report on the State Militia when I get home."

It will be gathered from this that two years at Aldershot had changed Rawlinson's mind as to the probability of an early war with Germany. Both Lord Roberts and Henry Wilson were convinced that a great clash in Europe, into which we should be drawn, was imminent, and it was, in part, their influence that decided Rawlinson to remain with the Regular army. During his two years at Aldershot he made two trips to Belgium, one of them in company with his chief, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, and the Chief of the Staff at Aldershot, Brigadier-General Robertson.[1] The party travelled down the valley of the Sambre, towards the German frontier, to investigate some suspicious railway developments by the Germans in that quarter. At Charleroi, where von Bülow first met Lanrezac in August, 1914, Rawlinson noted prophetically, "This would be a queer country to fight in, a long chain of mines and factories. I would much rather have to attack across the Sambre, than have to defend the line of the river."

At Aldershot, Rawlinson became a keen supporter of Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's demands for more machine-

[1] Afterwards Field-Marshal Sir W. Robertson.

guns, and advocated the addition of a machine-gun company to every infantry brigade. But there was no money for an addition to our fighting strength, which might well have changed the course of the retreat from Mons.

In May, 1909, Rawlinson was promoted major-general, and three months later he, in consequence, vacated the command of his infantry brigade. While he was waiting for employment, there came to him an invitation at which he jumped. Lord Kitchener had just given up the command in India, and was to make an extensive tour in the Far East, and in Australia, and New Zealand. He invited Rawlinson to join him for the first part of this tour.

Leaving England at the end of September, 1909, Rawlinson made a short stay in Berlin, and visited Potsdam. He was as much impressed as ever with the efficiency of the German troops and, from a talk with Brigadier-General Waters,[1] was equally impressed with the steady progress of their military organization. "Waters says that the German Army and Navy are working to be ready by the end of 1911, and that war may come any time after then. He tells me that at certain periods during the summer months they have as many as one million men under arms. The army corps commanders have power to call up the reservists, who have recently left the ranks, for seventeen days' training. The number of these is sufficient to bring all the fighting troops up to strength. So that all that would be necessary, when Germany intended to go to war, would be for the Great General Staff to give the date for all army corps to call in their reservists for annual training at the same time, and the German Army would be practically mobilized, without anyone knowing anything about it. This wants thinking over. I do not believe it is realized at home. We, with our much slower system of mobilization, might be in great difficulties if the Germans tried any such manœuvre."[2]

In Moscow, Rawlinson had his first sight of Russian troops. "As we were coming away from the palace we met

[1] Then our Military Attaché at Berlin.

[2] In the following year there was a scare of German invasion, probably due to the digestion of this very information. *Vide* Callwell—"Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson," vol. I, p. 81.

the guard of about one hundred men marching up to relieve their brothers in arms. So we stayed and watched them, with what we had seen at Potsdam in our minds. The performance was of the sort I expect to see at the Summer Palace at Pekin. I could hardly believe that these men were soldiers at all. They slouched along in a formation that would have disgraced the worst of our Territorial battalions. They right-formed into a ragged line and, with a bugler on the flank blowing an incoherent series of false notes, advanced towards the other guard. Their attempt at presenting arms was ridiculous, and then, after the officers had exchanged a few words, they piled arms and fell out. It was not a show which gave me any confidence in the Russian Army. The Germans could take on any number of such troops and beat them. I did not think any more of their cavalry than I did of their infantry. They can't manœuvre on their horses, and are a rather indifferent collection of mounted infantry. My old 8th M.I. would rout twice their number of Russian Cossacks. The Slavs are brave, and are said to be indifferent to death; but unless they improve very quickly it will be simply murder leading them against Germans."

Travelling by the Trans-Siberian railway, Rawlinson reached Pekin on October 12, and there met Lord Kitchener. He was much interested in his first sight of the Legation quarter. "Mr. Porter, the vice-consul at Tientsin, who is staying here, took me round the scene of the attack on the legations in the Boxer rebellion. It strikes me as very curious that such a large area, situated in the very heart of this immense city, could have been held at all. The Boxers must have been either very badly led, or have been very chicken-hearted, not to have captured the whole place.

"Since the rebellion, the whole of the legations have been rebuilt on lines that are easily defended. An open space of a couple of hundred yards has been cleared all round the outer wall, which is well loopholed, and it would take a stout-hearted Chinaman to assault that place as it now is. But they will have another try one of these days, for it is unthinkable that any self-respecting nation would allow an international force to live permanently in a fort-

ress inside their capital, and alongside the palace of their Emperor. No; when China begins to think, she will abolish the foreign garrison either by diplomacy or by force. The time for this may be distant, but it will come, and the sooner China develops her individuality the shorter that time will be. She will have to get rid of the Manchus, who are corrupt and incompetent administrators. When she does that, we shall have to look out for squalls."

The evidence of the decay of the splendour of Imperial China depressed him and, though he was amused at the eagerness of Kitchener's hunts for porcelain, he was relieved when the time came to leave for Port Arthur and the battlefields of the Russo-Japanese War. After examining in some detail the ground over which the Japanese attacked Port Arthur, and the battlefields of Liao-yang and Mukden, he came to a conclusion, then very generally accepted, which the experiences of the Great War proved to be wrong: "I am pretty certain that, with a little more enterprise and judgment, the Japs might have taken Port Arthur two months earlier than they did. They admit now that they made their main attack on the wrong side, and they were terribly deliberate. The same criticism applies to Liao-yang and Mukden. Their passion for caution and making sure might well have led them into bad trouble if they had been fighting a more enterprising enemy than the Russians. To act on the defensive against the Japanese is like trying to stop the action of acid with water. They cut their way slowly but surely into the opposition. But a resolute surprise attack might well have caught them napping. It is to Japanese caution, rather than to trenches, that I ascribe the length of the battles. However, it is only fair to say they knew their enemy, and might have acted quite differently if they had been fighting someone else."

A journey through Korea brought the party by way of Shimonoseki to Tokio, where they were received with a perfection of state ceremonial in marked contrast to their experiences in Moscow. Rawlinson revelled in the colour and beauty of Japan and, for once, was quite sorry to tear himself away to accompany Kitchener to the manœuvres of

LORD KITCHENER AND SIR HENRY RAWLINSON AT 203 METRE HILL, PORT ARTHUR, 1909

the Japanese Army. The two points which struck him most in the manœuvres were the ways in which engineers and machine-guns were used. "The Japs have six machine-guns per regiment, and nearly always employ them massed. This is practically the same as the machine-gun company which I have been advocating for our infantry brigades. The result, in the Japanese Army, is that their machine-guns are far better handled than are ours, better use is made of ground, and there is more initiative in their machine-gun officers, because they feel they are of importance, and are understood. I remember, in South Africa, a battalion commander, who wanted to deploy a company on some ground on which was his solitary machine-gun, shouting to the wretched subaltern in charge, 'Take that damned cart out of the way.' Until our machine-guns are better organized, they will often be treated as 'damned carts.'

"Every division of the Japanese Army has three strong companies of engineers. They are armed like infantry, and train with the infantry, so they understand what infantry wants. They are real pioneers, and not specialists. Our engineers are rarely in touch with our infantry, and look on manœuvres as a silly interruption of business. We must try to change that, somehow, and in my opinion, we could, for our sappers are absurdly costly for the value we get out of them. We ought to contract out the work they do in barracks, and give them a chance to be real soldiers.

"On my return to Tokio, I had a very interesting conversation with Kitchener. I was talking to him about his future, and asked him if he would like to be Secretary of State for War. He said he would only take it on condition that military affairs were treated like foreign affairs, and that they would be approached in a non-party spirit. He would like an assurance from the leader of the Opposition, that he would not necessarily go out with a change of Government, and that the new ministry should have the option of keeping him. He said he did not think it in the very least likely that the politicians would agree to this. His idea is that we must have continuity of military administration for a considerable term of years in order to develop a really Imperial military policy. He told me confidentially

that semi-official military conversations were going on between our General Staff and the French General Staff with a view to a combined plan of campaign if Germany attacked France. He said he did not like this, as we had no plan of our own, and it would mean inevitably that we should be tacked on to a French plan, which might not suit us. He realizes that, even if he became Secretary of State on his own terms, he would be up against limitless prejudices and conservative ideas, and would be in for a harder battle than he had in India, and he is, therefore, not anxious to undertake the task unless he is reasonably sure that he can carry through reforms which will be of real service to the country and the Empire. He is going on to Australia and New Zealand, and hopes to get to Canada. He will then be ready, if he is called upon, to prepare a comprehensive scheme for the development of the forces of the Empire, if we are engaged in a life and death struggle."

Soon after this conversation took place, Rawlinson said good-bye to Kitchener and returned home, via Hongkong and Singapore. On reaching England at the end of January, 1910, he learned that he was to get command of the 3rd Division on Salisbury Plain in June. His four years in command of a division at home were not of interest, save to himself and his troops. They gave him experience in dealing with men, and opportunities of completing his technical equipment as a commander, of which he took the fullest advantage. Our chief artillery school and artillery practice camps being on the Plain, Rawlinson was able to study the latest development of artillery, material and tactics; with the result that few infantrymen, if any, have ever gone to war with a better knowledge of the possibilities and limitations of gunnery. Salisbury Plain, too, was the birthplace of military aviation, and Rawlinson watched its growth with a keen and understanding eye. When he regretfully said good-bye to his 3rd Division, at the end of May, 1914, it was as well trained as any in our little army; and a few months later, when at Mons it bore the brunt of our first battle in the war, it was to do its trainer full credit.

Just before he gave up command, Rawlinson took his

wife, who had not been well, for a short trip to Algiers and Morocco: "I have been immensely struck by the progress which the French have made since I was here in 1894. Railways, roads, irrigation—all have gone ahead. I have had long talks with some of the French soldiers here. They all think that war is imminent, because Germany cannot afford to wait till the Russian Army is improved and its mobilization speeded up. The French XIXth Corps here is efficient, well trained and well manned. It goes to France at once on mobilization, and behind it there are large reserves of native troops. They say that in a few years' time they will be able to provide 300,000 men from North Africa, and they count on them to balance the German Army. All the soldiers here realize that their chances of getting these troops across the Mediterranean depend on our goodwill, so they are delighted with the Entente. I told Lyautey[1] that, in the event of war with Germany, our fleet would, apart from its action at sea against the German Navy, be worth three army corps to France on the outbreak of war, because it would release troops from the coasts of France, and make the North African reserves available. In the course of the first few months it would be worth double that number of army corps, so that our fleet pretty well trebles the size of our first military reinforcements. He quite agreed with me; but he is the first Frenchman who has done so. Most of them measure our strength by the number of men we can put alongside them in France at the outbreak of war, and want to know why we don't have conscription."

On leaving the pleasant house at Chalderton, which had been his head-quarters on the Plain, Rawlinson spent two months on half-pay, and from the beginning of July watched the war clouds gathering, in uncomfortable uncertainty as to what fate had in store for him.

[1] Marshal Lyautey, then Governor-General.

CHAPTER VI

ANTWERP AND YPRES

IT was with a sore heart that Rawlinson saw the 3rd Division, which he had trained and loved, taken to France by another. Still more bitter was the discovery that there was no place for him in the Expeditionary Force. "I can only attribute it," he wrote sadly, "to the fact that Sir John French was displeased with my handling of the 3rd Division at manœuvres last year." He soon found this to be a hasty judgment, and that Sir John's opinion of him was not so unfavourable as he supposed. The divisions of the Expeditionary Force naturally went out under the men who were in command of them when mobilization was ordered, and it was not easy to find a place for a senior major-general in the little army which fought at Mons. But Rawlinson could not be idle in a crisis, and on August 4, the day of the declaration of war, he took up the post of Director of Recruiting at the War Office. "When on that day it seemed more than likely that Lord Kitchener would be appointed Secretary of State for War, my hopes revived, and I was not sorry to find myself again working under his orders, when he was finally put into the War Office." So, from the vantage point of an office-chair in Whitehall, he watched, with such patience as he could command, the retreat from Mons and the "miracle of the Marne." The day on which that battle ended in the retreat of the Germans, brought him also other news which warmed his heart:

"*September 9.*—Recruiting continues brisk, and keeps me in the office from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. We have now 417,000 men for K.'s armies. There has been much overcrowding and discomfort at the depots, with want of food, clothing and blankets, etc. Ivor Herbert asked questions in the House, and I was invaded by seven M.P.s this even-

ing—rather hostile, but I managed to pacify them. There will be a row to-morrow, I expect. The reserve machinery has failed,[1] and we must try something else.

"I suggested sending men on furlough from the depots where they cannot be accommodated, and giving them an allowance for subsistence till we are ready for them. We shall see. I heard from the C.I.G.S.[2] to-day that I am to be given command of the IVth Army Corps; 7th and 8th Divisions.[3] Hurrah! I shall hope to be in France in another six weeks at latest. From to-morrow we are to wear uniform at the War Office.

"*September 10.*—News from France continues to be good. Rather a fuss in the office to-day, as there was a misunderstanding about my proposal of an allowance of 3s. a day for the recruits sent to their homes. Sclater[4] told me that it had been agreed, so I thought he had submitted it to K. I therefore told Illingworth, who told the Prime Minister, who announced it to the Cabinet. K. knew nothing about it, and was furious, so I got it in the neck! K. threatened to resign if politicians interfered with him in his work, and I wrote to the Prime Minister to say there had been a misunderstanding. I took the letter over and had a talk with Asquith, who wrote to K. and finally persuaded him to allow the 3s. This the Prime Minister announced amid cheers in the House. 438,000 recruits to-day!"

These little breezes in the War Office were soon forgotten in the excitement of an unexpected change. Rawlinson had not to wait even his six weeks to get to France, for Sir John had wired for him and, on September 21, he was at Fère-en-Tardenois, where G.H.Q. was established. There he got the welcome news that he was to take charge of the 4th Division—four was to be Rawlinson's lucky number in the war—its commander, General Snow, injured by a fall, being in hospital in Paris. He found the head-quarters

[1] *i.e.* the arrangements for equipping and training recruits had not been designed to meet a great expansion of the army, and were hopelessly inadequate to meet the influx of recruits which followed Lord Kitchener's call to the nation.

[2] General Sir Charles Douglas, who was Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the beginning of the war.

[3] The 7th and 8th Divisions were being formed mainly from battalions withdrawn from colonial stations.

[4] Lieutenant-General Sir H. Sclater—Adjutant-General.

staff, under the impression of the battle of the Marne and the advance to the Aisne, expecting an early end of the war, eager to get every available man out from England, and sceptical of the possibility of creating new armies. "We discussed," he wrote that evening, "the situation at the front, the disposal of and future policy of the 'K.' armies, and the general conduct of the campaign, which, we came to the conclusion, was satisfactory as far as it has at present gone. K. is an enormous asset. In the future he will be yet more valuable, for he has the confidence of the nation, and can do pretty well what he likes. I think the war will go on till the 'K.' armies are fit to take the field. Henry[1] does not agree with me. He thinks that if we make a big effort now it will be over by Christmas, and is furious with K. for keeping officers at home to nurse his ridiculous armies. We shall see who is right in the long run."

The 4th Division was on the British left on the Aisne, and, while in command of it, Rawlinson was introduced to the intricacies of trench warfare. "I have been all round the positions," he wrote on September 23. "They are very curiously situated. My infantry is all on the north side of the Aisne, whilst the whole of my guns, except six which are dug into the firing line, are all on the south of the river. The infantry are well dug in and the guns well placed. I am very well satisfied with my staff. Archie Montgomery and Burnett-Hitchcock are all that I could wish, and George Milne,[2] my artillery commander, is first class."

The crisis of the battle of the Aisne was over before Rawlinson arrived, and there were few excitements on the front of the 4th Division. The chief interest was the discussion of the plan for the move of the British army to Flanders. Just as this movement was beginning, on October 4, a message came to the 4th Division calling its commander to G.H.Q. "I dined with Sir John French. It appears that K. has selected me to go and try to save Antwerp. The 7th Division is to land at Zeebrugge and Ostend with the 3rd Cavalry Division under Byng, and we

[1] Field-Marshal Sir H. Wilson, then Major-General Wilson; Sub.-Chief of General Staff at G.H.Q.

[2] Now Lieutenant-General Sir A. Montgomery-Massingberd: Major-General Burnett-Hitchcock, and Field-Marshal Sir G. Milne, C.I.G.S.

are to proceed to Antwerp as soon as the force is landed. A difficult and responsible mission."

Circumstances were to make the mission even more difficult than it first appeared. The Belgian Army had retired to Antwerp in the third week of August, and there was watched by German reserve troops. Two sorties from Antwerp, on August 24–26 and September 9–13, had caused some anxiety at German Head-quarters, and von Falkenhayn, who had succeeded von Moltke as Chief of the German General Staff, had determined, as a preliminary to a final attempt to turn the allied left in Flanders and reach the Channel coast, that the place must be reduced. The besiegers were reinforced, and furnished with the heaviest siege artillery at Germany's command. These formidable weapons, the 42 cm. howitzers, began to bombard the forts of Antwerp on September 27–28. The situation at once became critical and, as early as October 1, the Belgian War Minister declared that the only way to save Antwerp was by a diversion from outside on the German left flank. The next day, October 2, Lord Kitchener took steps to prepare for such a diversion. He was ready to send the 7th Division and the 3rd Cavalry Division to Ostend and Zeebrugge, and to use them in an attempt to relieve the fortress, provided the French would agree to co-operate with an adequate force; but in a telegram to Sir John, sent on October 2, he made it clear that he had no intention of using the little British expedition in an isolated effort. Further telegrams somewhat obscured this point, and Rawlinson left G.H.Q. with no definite orders, and under the impression, as he says, that he was to proceed to Antwerp with his troops as soon as they were landed.

The development of the attempt at relief has been described in detail by two of the three persons chiefly concerned, Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Grey of Fallodon. On the night of October 2, Mr. Churchill was on his way to Dunkirk, when his train was stopped and he was brought back to London to meet Lord Kitchener and Sir Edward Grey, as he then was, at the house of the former. He found his colleagues much perturbed at a telegram from Sir F. Villiers, our Minister at Brussels announcing that the

Belgian King, Government and field army intended to abandon Antwerp next day.[1] The ministers agreed that everything possible should be done to prevent such a calamity, and Mr. Churchill left for Antwerp to report on the position. With his usual energy he proceeded to take charge of the situation, offered to resign his post as First Lord and to take "formal military charge of the forces at Antwerp."[2] At his suggestion, two brigades of the newly-raised Naval Division from home were sent into Antwerp to reinforce a Regular brigade of Marines, which had already gone there from Dunkirk. By October 4, Kitchener had won the consent of his colleagues in the Cabinet to the dispatch of the 7th Division and the 3rd Cavalry Division[3] to Ostend and Zeebrugge—though there was still doubt of the extent of the French co-operation—and had chosen Rawlinson to command these troops. But the Cabinet, anxious as to the possibility of invasion, was unwilling to strip England of Regular soldiers, and would not consent to let the 7th Division go "for more than a rapid movement on Antwerp." The Antwerp expedition was, therefore, not placed under the orders of Sir John French, and Rawlinson found himself dealing directly with the War Office.

Sir John was very much opposed to sending any force into Antwerp, and was inclined to resent the appearance of an independent British commander on the Western Front; Kitchener was trying to concert plans for the relief of Antwerp with the French Government, who found that their own chief general, Joffre, did not receive the proposals of our War Office with any enthusiasm; but Mr. Churchill, who in Antwerp had superseded our diplomatic representative on the spot as the representative of the British Government, had, by assuring them of support, persuaded the Belgian King and his ministers to hold on. So honour and interest urged us to act. Meanwhile, the German

[1] It has since transpired that Sir F. Villiers was misinformed. The Belgian proposal was to move the seat of Government, not the field army.

[2] Churchill. "The World Crisis, 1914-1918," p. 351. The offer was not accepted.

[3] The 7th Division was commanded by the late Major-General Sir T. Capper; the 3rd Cavalry Division by General, now Lord, Byng.

howitzers were crushing the forts of Antwerp. We had been caught without a plan; and hurry, confusion and uncertainty were the consequences of lack of preparation and foresight. Even the arrangements for the base, communications and administrative staff of the British expedition were only made as an after-thought.[1] Such was the situation when Rawlinson left the Aisne for Ostend.

"*October 5.*—Having packed up, I was joined at Carrière l'Eveque,[2] by Bendor, Joe Laycock and Toby.[3] We started at 5.30 a.m. and, after breakfasting at Amiens, reached Dunkirk soon after 6 p.m. A long drive which passed off without incident. At Dunkirk I met Admiral Hood, just returned from Antwerp, where they are in a critical position. The Belgians have lost two forts, as well as the town of Lierre, behind which, however, they are holding an inner line of trenches with the assistance of Paris[4] and some 2,000 Marines. I was lucky enough to get Fitzgerald[5] in London on the 'phone. I got out of him that I was to go to Bruges via Ostend. The 7th Division begin landing at Zeebrugge to-morrow morning at 4 a.m. and the 3rd Cavalry Division follow them. I heard from the consul that two merchantmen had been blown up by mines off Zeebrugge to-day. I trust the transports may have better luck. Went on to Ostend, where we arrived about 9 p.m. Found no one to tell me anything, except the consul. No signs of any French troops. The situation is complicated; I cannot move forward with my troops for at least three or four days, by which time it is quite possible Antwerp may have fallen."[6]

Late that night he received his orders from Kitchener, which were to the effect that he was to attack the left flank of the German army investing Antwerp. "A vigorous offensive of the combined British, French, and Belgian forces against the Germans should compel them to retire." The British forces had not arrived, he could get no information about the French forces, so it only remained to go

[1] Callwell, "Experiences of a Dug-out," p. 39.
[2] 4th Divisional Head-quarters on the Aisne.
[3] The Duke of Westminster: Brigadier-General Sir J. Laycock: his brother, Colonel Rawlinson.
[4] Major-General Paris, Royal Marines.
[5] Colonel Fitzgerald, private secretary to Lord Kitchener.
[6] Antwerp fell on October 9.

to Antwerp and see what the Belgian forces could do. Of his visit to that town on October 6, he wrote Sir John French the next day: "I visited Antwerp yesterday, where I found Winston Churchill with 7,000 Marines and Naval Reserves, some of whom were in the trenches. During yesterday morning the Belgians, who held the line on the flanks of the Marines, were driven out of their defences, and the whole line fell back to a position only 3 kilometres from the line of inner forts. After consultation with Winston, and being present at a Council of War presided over by the King, I finally came to the conclusion that it would be best to put the Naval Brigades and Marines into the line of inner forts, which are very strong, and to leave the Belgians to defend the outer line as long as possible. I first proposed to the Cabinet that it would be possible to get the infantry of the 7th Division up here by rail to Antwerp, for the purpose of counter-attacking the Germans and driving them back over the river Nethe, thus re-establishing their original line. They would not hear of any such proposal; firstly, because they did not believe we could do it (they were wrong); and, secondly, because they said they could not remain there even if we did succeed. There was nothing further to be done in this direction, so we acquiesced in the proposal to move all Belgian troops across the river to entrenched camps on the left bank of the Scheldt, and leave the Naval Brigades, Marines and the heavy artillery in the forts. The Marines and Naval Brigades can hold this line for ever. It is immensely strong, protected by wire entanglements 40 yards wide and absolutely impassable by German infantry. But the German heavy guns will be brought to bombard the town in the next few days, and I doubt if the inhabitants will stand the shelling for more than a fortnight or three weeks . . . The Belgian idea is to relieve Antwerp by operating against the attacking force from the direction of Ghent towards Malines. But the Belgian Army will not be fit to take part in any such movement for a week or ten days, and, as no French troops have yet arrived, it would be risky for me to have a go with the 7th Division and the 3rd Cavalry Division. I told Lord K. this, on the telephone this evening, and suggested sending

Smith-Dorrien[1] to detrain farther north and join me. He has, no doubt, conferred with you about this. The point is, I cannot relieve Antwerp with my present forces. If it is worth relieving, three divisions are the least that can do it. I do not know if Joffre would contemplate a suggestion of this kind favourably, but I think it is the right thing to do."

Neither Joffre nor Sir John contemplated this suggestion favourably; both were intent on outflanking the right of the German main armies in the west, which both believed they could do, and both were unwilling to divert troops to Antwerp. Rawlinson was therefore left in a difficulty. On October 7, he wrote: "Information is very contradictory, but there are evidently large German forces collecting in Belgium, which may be concentrating for the purpose of having a go at us owing to our isolated position. The fog of war is thick at the moment, and the worst of it is that the Cavalry Division is not yet on shore, and will not be ready to operate till the day after to-morrow. However, the 7th Division will give a good account of themselves, I know, and I expect that we shall be in action before long. The problem is complicated, and needs careful handling if we are to avoid making a mess of it." He would not risk his little force in attempting to carry out Kitchener's orders, without greater assurance of assistance from the French than he had as yet obtained; it was too late to send troops into Antwerp, and he could get no support for his alternative plan. It only remained to endeavour to keep open a line of retreat for the Belgians—a risky job. Therefore, early on October 8, he telephoned to Kitchener: "Fear I am too weak to keep road open, but will try unless you forbid. Cavalry Division disembarking at Zeebrugge and Ostend, cannot move till to-morrow, but can be at Ghent by 9 p.m. 7th Division can be at Ghent to-morrow evening, but risk great unless German strength over-estimated."

On October 9, he moved his infantry to Ghent and, at last, got into touch with the French forces moving into Belgium. That night came the fatal news, sooner than he anticipated, that the Germans were in Antwerp, and the

[1] General Sir H. Smith-Dorrien, commanding the IInd Corps, which was then on its way north from the Aisne.

next morning arrived the information that he was placed under the orders of Sir John French. The Cabinet had yielded to Kitchener, and had agreed that Rawlinson's troops should remain in France.

"A difficult and very important mission has been entrusted to me," he wrote from Ostend. "I am here in a corner of Belgium with the double mission of protecting the Belgian Army and Government, whilst at the same time operating in conjunction with the larger forces under Sir John French. To-day I was present at another Council of War at the palace here, when the King took the chair. General Pau[1] and I had the difficult task of imposing our military views on a body of men overwrought with chagrin, responsibility and despair. We succeeded in persuading them to send the Belgian Army to France, in inducing the Government to move to Dunkirk, and the King himself to go to Havre, leaving us to deal with the military situation as best we might for the Allied cause. The King is, of course, much depressed, and reluctant to leave his army; but he takes things wonderfully philosophically and has acquiesced in all our suggestions. Pau is a first-class man, a thoroughly trained soldier of very strong character, who knows his own mind and expresses it admirably.

"I have been very hard at work, from 6 a.m. till midnight daily, with many interruptions during the night. My administrative staff has not yet arrived, so I have had to do all the supply and transport work myself, while conducting delicate and important international negotiations. Laycock and Bendor have looked after me in a way I can never be sufficiently grateful for. Toby, I have also found useful, and Amery,[2] with fluent pen and sharp, clever ways, has helped me greatly."

Sir Hereward Wake arrived on the 11th from headquarters, bringing Sir John French's instructions with a pleasant little postscript: "You have done excellently in a very nasty position." Rawlinson's force was to be called the IVth Corps, and, if it was still very much in the air and a long way from the British support, its commander was

[1] Joffre's representative in the north.
[2] Now the Right Honourable L. S. Amery.

relieved to find himself dealing with but one master. "I have had a trying time under the various orders of Winston, K. and French."

"*October 12.*—Much has happened since I last had time to write in my diary. Antwerp has fallen. 2,000 men of our Naval Brigade have been interned in Holland, and I have moved my IVth Corps down to the neighbourhood of Roulers and Thielt, where it is nearly in touch with the IIIrd Corps at Hazebrouck.[1]

"The Belgians are trying to get away along the coast. Large German forces were located last night just east of Ghent, where Capper has been with the bulk of the 7th Division for the last two or three days. I pulled him away in the night, and hope he may have got out without the Germans knowing of it.

"I have, during the past few days, had many dealings with General Pau and the Belgian Government as regards the protection of the Belgian Army and the safety of Ostend, where the King and his Government still are. After much talk I have persuaded them to give up Ostend, and the King to go to Havre, at any rate for a few days, until we get concentrated and in a position to operate strongly against the German forces now in Belgium. There is no sense in giving a German cavalry raid the chance of scooping the King, and he sees that; but he is very loath to leave his country and his army in its hour of trial. I told him he would soon be back again.[2] The loss of Antwerp is, of course, a heavy blow to him and to the Belgian nation. It had always been looked upon as impregnable by them and, when I was there on the 6th with Winston, I certainly thought that they would be able to hold it for quite a long time. However, the King, though sad, is full of courage, and I never heard a whisper of giving in."

On the 13th came the message, "C.-in-C. wishes you to move on Ypres to-morrow," and so, on the 14th, began

[1] The IIIrd Corps, under General Pulteney, had followed the IInd Corps from the Aisne, and had begun to detrain at St. Omer and Hazebrouck on October 11. It then advanced towards Armentières.

[2] The King of the Belgians, in fact, never left his army. Only the Government went to Havre. As soon as the army had established a firm front, the King took up his quarters in a little villa at La Panne, where he was joined by the Queen.

the first march of British troops towards the town which for four years was to be what the French aptly and neatly called "*un point sensible*" on the British front. Uncertainty as to whether the Belgian troops had sufficiently recovered to be able to oppose the advancing Germans, and as to the amount of support that the French were prepared to give, made the flank march to Ypres an anxious undertaking. Not only were strong German forces reported east of Ghent, there were rumours of other German movements northwards from Lille. Skirmishes with German cavalry were frequent, but the march to Ypres was completed with small loss.[1]

"*October 14.*—We marched into Ypres to-day; Byng soon after 9 a.m., Capper not till 3 p.m., owing to delays of transport. The morning was fine, but rain came on soon after noon. However, the weather cleared about 2 p.m., and this enabled us to make a valuable air reconnaissance. German cavalry were reported at Menin, and the road clear from there east of the Lys, from which I infer that the German infantry reported to be advancing north of Lille has not yet reached that river.

"About 11 a.m., as we were all standing in the market-place, a German aeroplane came over. We opened on it with rifle and machine-gun fire, and it answered, not by dropping a bomb, but by coming down in a field some two kilometres away. We were soon on the spot, only to find that the occupants had departed. A hunt through the woods produced two German officers. They were unwounded; one quite a nice cheery boy of 25, the other rather a surly fellow. The incident did good. We also captured a dozen or more Uhlans during the day, and their arrival in the market-place caused much excitement. So, altogether, these small incidents have bucked people up.

"The 7th Division are rather tired after their wet march with the transport in front of them. I heard on the tele-

[1] Sir John French's statement in his "1914," p. 184: 'This would not have necessitated that dangerous and exhausting flank march, costing such terrible loss, by which alone they (7th Division and 3rd Cavalry Division) were able eventually to unite with the main British forces," must have been due to a lapse of memory. The losses in Rawlinson's command up to the time of its junction with the main British forces were trifling, thanks to the caution with which the march was made.

phone that we are to be ready to march to-morrow at 6 a.m., but I do not know what they want me to do. There is a big gap of from 8 to 10 miles on my left, between me and the Belgian Army. If this is not filled to-morrow, we shall be liable to get in a mess. The airmen and armoured cars did splendid work to-day. The latter took most of the prisoners."

The next morning he got an insight into Sir J. French's plans.

"*October 15.*—I met Sir John at noon at Hazebrouck. He congratulated me on the good work I had done in Belgium, and unfolded to Allenby, Pulteney[1] and myself his plan of action for the future. He is, I think, somewhat optimistic, but that is better than the other extreme. My task is to push forwards slowly till the IIIrd Corps comes up in line, and then to press on, as the left flank of our line, with the French cavalry and Byng on my left again.

"I, therefore, ordered Capper to the line of villages east of Ypres, moving him forward from St. Julien to Hollebeke, where Allenby is to join hands with his cavalry. I sent Byng off to Langemarck to continue Capper's left as far as the Forest of Houthulst, which is to-day being held by Belgians. These positions I shall hold on to until Pulteney comes up in line, and we are permitted to make a general advance."

The 16th—a foggy, cold and rainy day—was occupied by the IVth Corps in carrying out these movements. On the 17th, Rawlinson entered in his diary: "Byng and Capper stationary. Douglas Haig came over. Thank goodness, his corps will be up soon now, for my left is none too safe. He says he is to move on Ypres. The sooner the better." He had heard that the Belgians on his left had fallen back from the Forest of Houthulst, and that considerable German forces were moving north-west from Roulers. His troops were still well in advance of the IIIrd Corps, and, with the information which he had obtained in Belgium in mind, he sensed danger from the north and east, that is, from the

[1] At this time, the cavalry corps under Allenby, the IInd Corps under Smith-Dorrien and IIIrd under Pulteney had arrived in Flanders. The Ist Corps under Haig was still on the Aisne.

country through which he had marched from Ostend. That night, orders arrived from Sir John, saying that he intended to carry out a vigorous attack on the enemy, and directing the IVth Corps to "move on Menin." Such a movement would carry the IVth Corps in a south-easterly direction, and expose its left and rear to attack from the very direction in which Rawlinson expected that the Germans might be in strength. As Sir John's order did not directly specify that he was to attack Menin, Rawlinson moved forward cautiously on the 18th. During the morning, staff officers arrived from G.H.Q., who pooh-poohed the idea of the Germans being in strength to the east, and expressed surprise at the slowness of the corps' advance. These visits were followed by peremptory orders that he was to attack in earnest. While he was considering how this was to be done, news was brought to him that the Germans were in strength north of Menin, and about Courtrai (7 miles E.N.E. of Menin). Though G.H.Q. obviously considered that he was "sticky," he determined not to be rushed into an attack until he knew more and, therefore, postponed his advance on Menin till the next day. His entry in his diary for the 19th is laconic:

"Orders to hand to attack Menin. Just as 7th Division was proceeding to attack, heavy German columns came down on my flank from the east. Extricated the division with 150 casualties."

Sir John French says, in his "1914," that he had meant Rawlinson to attack Menin on the 18th, and that he had definite information that the place was but lightly held on the 17th and, while careful to find reason for his subordinate's caution, indicates plainly his opinion that, if Rawlinson had been more vigorous, we might have secured Menin and the line of the Lys. Now, it is true that there was no great force of Germans about Menin on the 17th, but on that day the leading troops of the XXVIIth Reserve Corps reached Courtrai, and the main body of that corps was there the next day. This was the left of the four German Reserve Corps, created since the outbreak of war, and detrained by Falkenhayn at and around Brussels about October 13, with orders to drive in the Allied left wing, and take Calais. It

is as certain, as any supposition in war can be that, that if Rawlinson had attacked Menin on the 18th, the 7th Division would have been crushed, and that would very probably have meant that we should have lost Ypres.

How correctly Rawlinson had sized up the situation, is shown by a letter which he wrote to Lord Roberts early on the 19th:

"I have a spare moment this morning before the reports come in, so cannot make better use of it than by sending you a line. We are engaged to-day with the Germans at Menin, protected on our left by a long line of cavalry, consisting of our 3rd Cavalry Division; the 4th, 5th and 6th French Cavalry Divisions; and the 1st and 2nd Belgian Cavalry Divisions. We have, therefore, plenty of cavalry about; but the Germans have moved their IIIrd Reserve Corps north by Ghent, Bruges and Ostend, till it is now on the line Nieukirk-Dixmude, where the Belgians are holding it. I hope they may continue to do so, otherwise our left flank will be in a precarious position.

"The Germans are undoubtedly massing troops up here in Belgium, with a view, I fancy, to turning our left flank, and endeavouring to roll up the long line of battle, which now extends from Ostend to Verdun. I doubt if they are strong enough to do this with their Reserve troops. It is a bold stroke, but must, I think, result in failure, and will finally assume a kind of stalemate very similar to that which exists between Soissons and Verdun at the present time. Our Ist Corps under Douglas Haig will arrive during the next few days, so that Sir John will then have the whole of his four army corps and three divisions of cavalry under his hand, to resist, if not to drive back, this great turning movement

"Since writing the above we had rather a narrow shave, for the German advance arrived on the flank of my army corps earlier than had been expected. I had been ordered to make an attack on Menin from the north, and was in process of carrying it out, when an airman came in with the startling intelligence that four strong columns of Germans were coming down from the eastward on to my left flank. I had only just time to warn the 7th Division of what was taking place, when they were attacked. How-

ever, the warning enabled them to front up to their opponents, and we got out of a difficult situation with only one hundred and fifty casualties. Had we not received the warning, or had we been more deeply committed to the attack, we should probably have lost one thousand. I fancy, from what I can hear, that the enemy has a large concentration against us in the Belgian theatre, with which he wants to drive us back on Calais and Boulogne."

On October 20, having escaped from the trap, he had leisure to write in his diary: "These last five days have been an anxious time for me, situated, as I have been, among Belgian and French troops, and far from any kind of support from our own people. To-day, however, the Ist Corps under Douglas Haig has come up to west of Ypres, as a support to my left. The Germans, who have assembled really large forces to my east and north-east, came on in earnest to-day, and attacked all along the line. Byng was forced back to the line Zonnebeke-Pilkem. The French cavalry divisions, of which there are four here, were driven out of the Forest of Houthulst; but the 7th Division succeeded in holding its ground, though heavily attacked all along the front until 8 p.m. to-night. Bridges,[1] from Fournes, says the Belgians fought very well to-day; they made a number of counter-attacks and lost 2,000 men. To-day we had a meeting of corps commanders with Sir John at Bailleul. Sir John very cold to me, and evidently still angry about Menin. He announced a change in his plans. We are to hold on with the IInd, IIIrd and IVth Corps, whilst the Ist Corps makes a counter-attack in the direction of Bruges. I hope it may succeed. Douglas Haig will have some heavy fighting to do before he gets to Bruges!"

With his troops locked fast in the front, at the head of the Ypres salient, where they had to bear the brunt of the German storm, no manœuvre was possible, and there was not much for Rawlinson to do, save to watch the gallant fight of his 7th Division. He felt keenly that his men were being asked to do too much, and said so in a report to G.H.Q. The sequel, with an account of a typical day in

[1] Major, now General Sir, T. Bridges, then liaison officer with the Belgians.

the battle, he describes on October 25: "This morning things are quieter, but yesterday was full of shocks. The Germans penetrated the line near Poezelhoek, and succeeded, as far as I can ascertain, in scuppering most of the Wiltshire Regiment. The woods in rear of our line were full of Germans, and it was not easy to get them out. The Northumberland Yeomanry went in first, and did good work, and then some of the 5th Brigade came up and completed the job. The 20th Brigade, under Ruggles-Brise,[1] were heavily attacked in the afternoon, and at one time were very hard pressed; but Monro[2] lent us the Connaught Rangers to strengthen the line, and that put things right for the moment. We are only hanging on by our eyelids, our losses in the last two days have been 100 officers and 2,000 men, exclusive of the Wiltshire Regiment . . . I went into G.H.Q. to find that Sir John was very angry with me for a telegram which I had sent him, which I finished up with the words, 'when the 8th Division arrives, it will be easier to hold a front of eight miles.' He thought this cheeky, and would not see me. Archie Murray[3] gave me a long talking to, and said that my wire had given Sir John a sleepless night, because, of course, there was truth in what I said. Most of our troubles and losses have come from being on such a wide front. We have to take up those wide fronts in order to get our flanks far enough out to avoid envelopment by the Germans. We want more men, and always more men. I returned home to Ypres rather down on my luck. However, I wrote a note of apology to Sir John, and received this generous answer:

'My Dear Rawly,

'Thanks for your kind note. Please let us meet as if nothing had happened. This is only a little incident. I have no doubt the Germans were responsible for both my telegram and yours. We have always been great friends; let us remain so. I grieve more than I can tell you for your sad losses so soon after taking the field,

[1] The late Major-General Sir H. Ruggles-Brise.

[2] Now General Sir C. Monro, then in command of the 2nd Division of Haig's 1st Corps.

[3] General Sir Archibald Murray, then Chief of the Staff to Sir John French.

but the 7th Division are fighting with great gallantry and success. Tell Capper and those with him that I appreciate this.

'Yours ever,

'J.F.'"

If Sir John's temper was explosive, the explosions were soon over. But with the 7th Division ably commanded by Capper, and the 3rd Cavalry Division joined to Allenby's cavalry corps, Rawlinson felt himself to be the fifth wheel to the coach, a function which his active mind and body abhorred. He was, therefore, more than ready to welcome the suggestion of a change.

"*October 27.*—Sir John arrived at 12.30 p.m. at Douglas Haig's head-quarters, where I saw him. He was very friendly, and we have arranged that I should go home and bring out the 8th Division as soon as possible. My Staff is to be kept together for the IVth Corps when I return."

There followed a strenuous ten days in England. On arrival he had a long talk with Kitchener. "He had had a stormy Cabinet meeting, and was rather down on his luck in consequence, but I tried to cheer him up. He talked about resigning, and seemed very angry with some of his colleagues in the Government. What was the cause of the disagreement I did not discover." He was commanded to Buckingham Palace, where he found the King, "anxious and not looking very well," and then went down to Salisbury Plain to give a series of lectures to the 8th Division, and supervise experiments in the co-operation of aircraft and artillery. He was engaged in this work when he got the news of the crisis of October 31 in the battle of Ypres, and of its happy ending. Knowing that the worst was over, and remembering how his comment on the length of front, which he had had to hold, had been received at G.H.Q., he may well have smiled grimly at a letter which came to him from his friend Henry Wilson:

"G.H.Q., 31.10.14.

"My Dear Henry,

Our Ist Corps, 7th Division and Cavalry Corps are being knocked about, and are falling back south of Ypres.

> We have lost a good many men, and altogether the thing is unfortunate, as it looks as though we would lose Ypres. The advantage will be that we shall get a narrower front, which we must get somehow, as we are not able to hold a line of thirty-five miles with about five or six divisions. We must have more men, and, if the 8th Division is not ready, we had better have a Territorial division . . . Hurry up troops of all sorts; we are getting shorter and shorter.
>
> "H."

On the day he received that letter, he was with Lord Roberts at Englemere. "He is in excellent health and spirits, but is obsessed with the idea that the Germans mean to land troops in this country. There is a strong feeling among all the authorities that the attempt will be made. K. thinks so, and his colleagues in the Cabinet are inclined to agree with him; but I doubt if they are right, unless they have some direct evidence from Berlin of which I have not heard. I doubt the Germans doing this; firstly, because of the great risks they must run; and, secondly, because I don't think they have the men available. If we were to lose two or three more of our capital ships, they might try conclusions in a big naval battle in the North Sea combined with a landing; but as long as we can maintain our 60 per cent. advantage in battleships, they will not be mad enough to allow their vindictiveness to influence what is their correct strategy. The Terriers are not yet fit to fight a general action, and the K. armies, though full of good men, are unclothed, unarmed and without ammunition. This being so, I fear they will insist on keeping the 8th Division, the only Regular troops in England, until wiser and less nervous counsels prevail."

Three days later, on November 5, he learned that the Government was not so nervous as he had feared, and that, in reply to a strongly-worded demand from Sir John, the 8th Division was to come out at once. So he left for France, and was at G.H.Q. on November 6, in time to receive the wreck of the gallant 7th Division, which had been relieved on the Ypres front. From them he learned details of what had taken place while he had been away, and was impressed

with the fact that the public at home had had little chance of knowing of the heroic efforts by which the German assaults had been stemmed. He wrote on November 10 to Colonel Fitzgerald: "I wish you could persuade K. to let the British public have a few more details of what the fighting has been like out here during the past fortnight. They have no idea of what has been going on. My 22nd Brigade returned to me yesterday to rejoin the 7th Division. It consists of Brigadier-General Lawford, four regimental officers and seven hundred and nine men.[1] All the brigade staff, and all the regimental officers except four, have been either killed or wounded, for there are very few missing. The fighting has been of the bitterest. The debacle was, I understand, saved on October 31 by the regimental officers, who all behaved like heroes, and, after the last reserves had been thrown in without stemming the tide, managed to rally their men, and turn on the astonished foe. They succeeded in driving the Germans back to their positions; not because they were helped by the artillery, or by fresh men, but simply because they refused to acknowledge that they were beaten. All this, I think, ought to be known to the nation. It would be the greatest incentive to recruiting. I have got Amery here, who could write a really strong account, if K. liked, and I would send it to you with the approval of Sir John."

Just after he had established his new head-quarters at Merville, he had the pleasure of receiving an old and much-loved chief.

"*November 12.*—Lord Bobs and Aileen[2] turned up to tea with me, both in the best of health and spirit. They went round the Indians and the 6th Division, and I took him to see some of the wounded Indians who are in hospital here."

"*November 14.*—When I visited head-quarters this morning on business, I was dumbfounded to hear that Lord Roberts had been taken seriously ill last night. He was very bad yesterday, but insisted on walking to the top of a hill.

"He was a little better before I left, and Aileen tells

[1] It had left England on October 4, over 4,000 strong. [2] Countess Roberts.

me the medical opinion is that he has a good fighting chance, though seriously ill."

"*November 15.*—This has been one of the saddest days of my life. I went in to pay my last respects to my dear Chief. I could not believe that he was dead. He looked just as he always did, and as I have seen him a thousand times; so quiet, so peaceful, and so full of all that is good and noble. His features, which I knew so well, were exactly as they always were—full of life and energy. I was alone with him for a long time. I shall never forget my parting with the greatest and most lovable man I have ever known."

"*November 17.*—I was one of the pall-bearers to-day. The others were Murray, Robertson,[1] Macready,[2] Lindsay,[3] David Henderson[4] and Henry Wilson. It was fine, but cold, with storms about; and as we placed the coffin in the ambulance to go away, the most beautiful rainbow I have ever seen appeared opposite to us."

All that he felt of devotion, affection and admiration, were expressed in the order of the day to the troops:

"The news of Lord Roberts's death will be received with profound sorrow by all ranks. Only three days ago he was going round the lines, full of keenness and vigour, conversing with the men of the British and Indian Armies —both of which he had commanded in peace and led to victory in war—visiting the wounded in hospital, and taking the liveliest interest in everything; it was, in fact, due to his insistence in walking up Kemmel Hill in order to survey the field of battle that he caught the chill, which developed into an attack of pleurisy, and was the immediate cause of his death. His end was such as he would have wished for himself—in harness, on active service, and with all his faculties undimmed.

"Britain and the Empire will always remember with pride and gratitude the name of the greatest British General since Wellington.

[1] Field-Marshal Sir W. Robertson, then Quartermaster-General in France.
[2] General Sir N. Macready, then Adjutant-General in France.
[3] General Sir W. Lindsay, then Major-General, Royal Artillery.
[4] The late General Sir D. Henderson, then commanding Royal Flying Corps.

"The British soldier will always look back with pride and affection on 'Bobs,' not only as the gallant leader with whom he marched to victory from Kabul to Kandahar, and from Modder River to Bloemfontein and Pretoria, but also as the Commander-in-Chief whose first and last thought was always for the welfare of the rank and file.

"Though we are such great losers by his death, he leaves behind—for all time—an example of a soldier's life which every one of us should take as our model. Courage, modesty, devotion to duty and self-denial, are perhaps the qualities which stand out pre-eminently in his life. It is for us to imitate him, and make these qualities our own in such measure as we can; then we shall all have done our part in fitting ourselves for the service of our country, and we can face the issues of this great struggle without self reproach and without fear."

A few days later the IVth Corps went into the line near Neuve Chapelle. The Germans were quiet, and the struggle was not with them, but with the mud and cold of Flanders. With no communication trenches, a front line which could not be deepened without finding water, and but a very meagre supply of the appliances of trench warfare, the struggle was as uneven as had been that at Ypres, if the losses were less deadly. On November 26, he wrote to Sir Henry Sclater:

"The last cold snap, which is now over, thank goodness, has cost us a good many men, mainly because it came on us suddenly when the men in the trenches were up to their knees in mud and slush. Their poor feet froze hard, and the Worcesters, who had the wettest trenches, had some three hundred cases of frost-bite. I hope that at least two hundred of them, whom we have not evacuated, will be back in a week or ten days. As far as I can gather, we have not had more than five hundred cases of frost-bite in the 8th Division, but the cold has produced a good many cases of ague and rheumatism amongst them, for they have had to endure a severe change from a hot summer abroad. The warm clothing is just arriving. Too late for the frost, but welcome all the same. To avoid frost-bite, we are putting

the men's legs in sand-bags stuffed with straw, much to the annoyance of the Engineers."

At the beginning of December, the grim struggle with Flanders mud was pleasantly relieved by the King's first visit to his army in the field. Hearing rumours of the King's intention, Rawlinson had, on November 25, written to his friend, Major Clive Wigram,[1] His Majesty's assistant private secretary:

"In a war like this, when the losses are so heavy that most of those deserving of reward are killed before the reward reaches them, we must find some better solution than that which is now in vogue. My proposal is either that His Majesty should himself come over to General Head-quarters and distribute the rewards periodically, or that he should depute the Prince of Wales to carry out the task for him. I understand that something of the kind is in the air. If it meets with the approval of His Majesty, I would suggest that, as a compliment to regimental officers and men who have borne the heat and burden of the day, they should alone be admitted to the Royal presence, and receive their rewards direct from the King's hands. The senior officers would all, I am sure, gladly stand aside to see their subordinates decorated!"

On December 1 he had the satisfaction of seeing his generous suggestion carried out: "We have been invaded by the great to-day. At 1 p.m. the King and the Prince of Wales arrived to lunch, and at 2 p.m. the President of the French Republic and General Joffre, also appeared. We sat down—sixteen, including Stamfordham,[2] Clive Wigram, Pertab Singh and Bikanir[3]—and we lunched off pheasants, which Toby had shot early this morning."

That evening Rawlinson wrote to Lord Kitchener: "The King's visit to-day has done much good. Luckily the weather was fine, and we arranged for His Majesty and the French President to pass down the lines of troops in an open car, so that not only would they see all that there was to be seen, but the troops as well as the inhabi-

[1] Now Colonel Sir Clive Wigram.
[2] Lord Stamfordham—the King's private secretary.
[3] The late Maharajah Sir Pertab Singh and the Maharajah of Bikanir, attached to the Indian Corps.

tants would see them. I could not withdraw men from the trenches, but, even without doing this, I was able to show them some 10,000 men, many of them with the mud of the trenches upon them. His Majesty conferred D.S.O.s, and Distinguished Conduct Medals on all those who had been awarded them, and the mark of Royal favour was very much appreciated. As we passed along the line the Germans began shelling one of our aeroplanes, and made very bad practice at it. This interested the King, who commented on the fact that there was little shelling going on."

The reason why there was not more shelling, Rawlinson explained in a letter to Lord Derby, written on December 24, which sums up the situation on the Western front at the end of 1914:

"I do not see how we are going to make a serious push here in the Western theatre. Our time is not yet. I never expected that the Allies would be strong enough to do big things till the spring, and for that reason I have always contended that this will be a long, and not a short, war. The Allies were not, and are not yet, ready. Rifles, equipment, clothing, etc., have all got to be made, and this cannot be done in a month, nor in six months. But most important of all is artillery ammunition. We are *all* short of it, even Germany, who has been preparing for this war for years, is short of it, such has been the expenditure.

"Now to come to our position here. We are dug in on a line 400 miles long opposite the Germans, and losing a daily average of at least 2,000 men on either side (our little British Army loses about 200 to 300 a day). So long as we maintain our general line we have nothing to fear. It would, of course, be better if we could drive the Germans out of France and Belgium, but we cannot do it with our present numbers and existing shortage of artillery ammunition. We may make small pushes here and there, but I doubt if we can undertake the big offensive until the K. armies come out and the last classes of the French soldiers are in the ranks. That may be next year."

So 1914 ended, and left the military world confronting a vast and unforeseen problem.

CHAPTER VII

NEUVE CHAPELLE AND LOOS

THE year 1915 was ushered in with a pleasant little function at Merville. "To-day, being the first of the new year, I got the Staff to make a contribution towards giving the children of Merville, poor little things, a treat. We collected quite a good sum, and were able to give each of those 2,000 children a parcel of buns and chocolate. We made a little ceremony of the occasion, and had a band to play 'God Save the King' and 'The Marseillaise.' Quite a crowd collected to receive the gifts. I took up my stand with the mayor, and conversed in my very best French with the councillors, wishing them a happy New Year and a speedy end to the war. It all did good in cementing the good feeling that exists between the army and the inhabitants, who are very poor, many of them half-starved."

In the trenches, 1915 began much as 1914 had ended. The weather, our deficiencies in the equipment needed for trench warfare, and the consequent sufferings of the troops, continued to be the chief preoccupation. "It is just our luck," Rawlinson wrote to Sir Henry Sclater, on January 9, "to have struck one of the wettest winters they have had in Flanders for the last 20 years. This is only January 9, and we have already had the whole of the rain which in normal years falls up to the end of February; so we hope that there is better weather before us at the end of the month. Considering the wretched state in which the men are whilst in the trenches, the sickness is remarkably little. Even in the soaking condition in which they live day and night, the admissions to hospital are under 5 per cent. I doubt, however, if this rate can last. There is never a complaint. The cheerfulness of the men is wonderful. They laugh at the discomfort, and the spirit throughout the Corps is excellent. But there is no blinking the fact that if we were required to undertake a march of twenty-five miles now

we could not do it. Life in wet trenches does not fit men for physical exertion and, holding as wide a front as I do (8 miles), it is difficult to get men in reserve to do more than rest and clean themselves. We have in the ranks too many Section D men.[1] They do their best, but they are too old for the strain of this tremendous war. I hear you are thinking of sending the K. armies out in February as a beginning. We shall want them, for, in my opinion, the enemy mean to pull out their new formations the moment the weather is fit for operations on a large scale, and I am inclined to think they mean to have another go at Calais."

The anxieties which the state of the troops aroused were not lessened by rumours of heated discussions at home as to the policy to be adopted in 1915, and as to the employment of the new K. armies. These rumours drifted out to France and were the cause of much uneasiness. In accordance with his practice, Rawlinson, to clear his mind, first set out at length his own views on the situation and on the policy required to meet it, and then communicated those views to his correspondents. Taking a broad survey of the whole field, and looking well into the future, he came definitely and deliberately to the conclusion that, for us, the Western must be the decisive front, because we could not afford to send considerable forces to other theatres of war; at least, not until the destination of the German reserves was known. He was gravely perturbed when he heard that there were those in high places at home who spoke of the "deadlock in the West" as a permanency which neither Allies nor Germans could change. "Calais is vital to Great Britain, Paris to France; should Germany choose to call a halt in the East and to put the whole balance of her reinforcements into the Western theatre, then neither Calais nor Paris would be safe, if our reinforcements are locked up somewhere else." For those reasons, Rawlinson was eager that the nation should be made aware, both of the nature of its tasks and of the possible dangers: "Why won't the Government," he wrote to Sclater, on January 16, "tell the Nation the truth, and say we must have at least another million men, in addition to those asked for, before we can

[1] The last category of the reserve of the Regular Army.

bring the war to a successful issue? Is it because we cannot make guns, rifles and equipment fast enough? Or is it, as an American suggested the other day, that we want to have a really large army at the end of the war, so as to be able to dictate terms of peace to the Allies? I can hardly believe the latter is the case. I hear rumours of a campaign in Austria, of sending direct aid to the Serbians, of the intervention of Italy and Rumania, and so forth, all very useful in their way, and all tending to harass our enemy, but we must beware of pitfalls. 'The greatest moral and physical superiority at the decisive point,' is as true to-day as it was 100 years ago, and Germany knows it and will practise it. You cannot change the decisive point to Austria until you are in a position to threaten Berlin, or, at the very least, until your own vitals are safe. Mind that Germany does not threaten Paris first. If she does, she will force you to conform to her strategy, unless the French are prepared to sacrifice their capital and we the ports of the channel."[1] In saying this Rawlinson was not looking only at his own front, and was not in any way averse to sending troops elsewhere, provided that they pulled their weight and that the Western front was made absolutely safe.

"The division of force is usually, as we know, a strategic mistake," he wrote to Major Clive Wigram, "unless the detachment can attract a force of the enemy stronger than itself. If by sending a British or Indian force to the Adriatic or Serbia—the Indian cavalry, as you know, are not improving their fighting efficiency in the rain and mud of North-Eastern France—we can oblige Germany to send her reserve formations, now being raised, to Austria in place of North-Eastern France, the detachment will have fulfilled its proper function; and it will certainly have done this if, by its presence there, Italy and Rumania can be drawn into the war."[2]

[1] This eventually happened in March, 1918.

[2] Just three weeks after this was written, Sir John French was saying very much the same thing to Mr. Winston Churchill, who came over to see him on January 29. The Commander-in-Chief told the First Lord that "he was willing to defer to the wishes of the Council by releasing in March, for political purposes in the Balkan States, two of the four new divisions which were to come to France." There was no reluctance among those who have been dubbed "narrow-minded Westerners" to make detachments, (i) provided that the Western front was made safe, (ii) that the detachments promised to fulfil the conditions which Rawlinson here describes.

While turning these grave considerations over in his mind, in such moments of leisure as the affairs of his corps allowed him, Rawlinson was actively engaged in helping to make good the deficiencies of our equipment for trench warfare, and was constantly superintending experiments with types of hand-grenades and trench-mortars. He had sent his brother to Paris to endeavour to obtain some effective answer to the German "minenwerfer," and was endeavouring to improve on the somewhat makeshift appliances with which the French had furnished him. At the end of January he took a few days' leave in England to discuss these experiments with General von Donop, the Master-General of the Ordnance, at the War Office. He arrived there the day after the meeting of the Cabinet, of January 28, at which it was decided to make an attack upon the Dardanelles by the fleet alone, with Constantinople as its ultimate objective.

"This has been one of the most interesting and absorbing days of my life," wrote Rawlinson, on January 31. "Lord K. sent for me, and I had a long and intimate talk with him. He unfolded to me his thoughts and ideas as to the future conduct of the war. They are much too confidential for me to record here in this diary, but suffice it to say that I quite follow the line of thought he divulged, and am in full concurrence with many of the proposals which he has in view. These cannot mature for six weeks or two months, at least, and must largely depend upon what the enemy may do in the meantime. The one thing certain is that, before considering these projects, we must see that the line in France and Flanders is absolutely secure against German attack. Upon this we are agreed.[1]

[1] This is the key to the much-discussed question of the delay in sending the 29th Division to the East. Lord Kitchener had told the Cabinet, on January 28, that "We have at present no troops to spare." Mr. Churchill, in his "World Crisis, 1915," p. 170 *et seq.*, maintains that a number of troops which eventually went to the Dardanelles were available in January, and should have gone there; and enters into an elaborate criticism of Lord Kitchener, in which he says: "He was torn between two perfectly clear-cut views of the war, both urged upon him with force and passion, with wealth of fact and argument. All the leading soldiers of the British Army, all the august authority of the French High Command, asserted that the sole path to victory lay in sending every single man and gun and shell to the French front to 'kill Germans' and break their lines in the West." This is a picturesque, but highly inaccurate, view of military opinion. It was not Sir John French's opinion, it was not Lord Kitchener's opinion, nor was it Rawlinson's. All three were agreed that, in

"Lord K. was most communicative, giving me his views on every point connected with the war, the organization of the armies, and their future employment. I have never seen him in better health and spirits; but he gets very tired in the evening after a hard day's work. He has had immense difficulties to contend with, which have not been made easier by the leader of the Expeditionary Force; but he resents nothing, has kept his temper under the most trying conditions, and is too broad-minded to allow these petty differences to make any alteration in his attitude towards those who have given him every provocation. No one appreciates and realizes this more than the King, with whom I had one and a quarter hours of very confidential conversation to-night. I was not a little surprised to find how much His Majesty knew, and how sound his views were in matters which I should not have thought would have come before him."

On his return from England, Rawlinson learned from Sir Douglas Haig that the First Army was to carry out the first big British attack upon the German entrenchments, and that the IVth Corps had been chosen to attack Neuve Chapelle. He at once became immersed in preparations for the battle, and was so engaged on February 20, his fifty-first birthday—"I confess I do not feel 51 either in body or mind"—a day which began pleasantly enough with the announcement in the paper that he had received the K.C.B., but ended sadly with the news that Sir John Gough, V.C., Haig's Chief of the Staff, had been mortally wounded. "He

the condition of the troops on the front, which Rawlinson has graphically described, the Western front could not be considered safe while there was doubt whether the Germans would continue to prosecute their campaign against Russia, or return to the Western front, and while it was uncertain whither they would send their new formations. It was not until the middle of January that von Falkenhayn reluctantly decided to send his new formations to the East. "With a heavy heart," he tells us, "the Chief of the General Staff had to make up his mind to employ in the East the young Corps, who were the only available military reserves at the time. This decision meant the further abandonment of any active campaign in the West for a long time." (Falkenhayn: "Critical Decisions at General Head-quarters," p. 58.) The destination of the new German formations did not become known to the Allies till a month later. This question of the safety of the Western front, which, as Rawlinson here shows, was the decisive factor in Kitchener's mind, Mr. Churchill omits to mention. There was always the danger that the Germans might attempt in 1915 what they tried to do in March, 1918. Even a "Verdun" in the spring of 1915, when the Allies were but ill provided with guns and ammunition, might have had very serious consequences.

is a great loss to Haig and to all of us, for he was one of the best, ablest and most gallant soldiers in the army. He was up visiting the 2nd Rifle Brigade, which is one of my battalions in the 8th Division, when a sniper spotted him and shot him on the left side. He had just been selected for the command of a division, and would have gone far." A few days later, Rawlinson had his first sight of the Canadians who arrived to join the IVth Corps. "I am very pleased with the Canadians," he wrote to Lord Kitchener, on March 6. "They are magnificent men, as you know, and they are very quick to pick up new conditions, and to learn the tricks of the trade of trench warfare. They have been in the trenches now nearly a week, without getting into trouble or having more than the normal rate of casualties. We have collected more than 200 guns in this neighbourhood preparatory to smashing in the German trenches, which, in view of the excellent photographs that the airmen have taken for us, we can locate exactly. Douglas Haig is just the person to have at the head of affairs, for you may be sure that if the thing can be done, he, at all events, possesses the character and determination to put it through. The new régime at G.H.Q. is now settling down into good working order.[1] Plans are thoroughly worked out and discussed scientifically, instead of being undertaken hurriedly and without due consideration. Altogether things look hopeful for the army's spring campaign."

The spring campaign began on March 10, with Rawlinson's attack on Neuve Chapelle. "Well, we have attacked and captured Neuve Chapelle," he wrote to Major Clive Wigram, six days later, "but at heavy cost, particularly in officers, who can ill be spared. The programme, which I had worked out very carefully beforehand, went like clockwork on the first day. The attack was a complete surprise to the enemy, and the first rush of our gallant fellows was everywhere successful, except on the extreme left, where the two howitzer batteries newly arrived from England did not shoot accurately. It was here that the Scottish Rifles lost so heavily in making their unsuccessful

[1] Sir W. Robertson had become Chief of the General Staff in France.

assaults on the main line of trenches. So long as the element of surprise lasted, and that was throughout the 10th, things went well, and we continued to gain ground. By the evening of the 10th we were in possession of the whole of the village, and of a considerable area north of it as well. This ground we held successfully against continued counter-attacks; but, notwithstanding heavy fighting on the 11th and 12th, and a series of bombardments and attacks, we failed to make any farther advance except on the extreme left of the enemy's trenches, where we captured a redoubt and some four to five hundred prisoners. The fighting was very heavy and sustained during the whole of the three days. Our men and officers behaved with the utmost dash and gallantry, repeatedly charging up to the keeps and redoubts of the enemy, only to be mowed down by rifle and machine-gun fire on reaching the wire which protected their enemies. The Germans fought well, particularly in those keeps, where they had assembled masses of machine-guns, carefully concealed amongst the ruins of the houses and the hedges which surround most of the gardens. One of the most heroic assaults was carried out by the 6th Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders—Territorials—a charge which was a credit to the army in general and the Territorials in particular. The same thing was done by other battalions—the Middlesex, Rifle Brigade, Worcesters, Sherwood Foresters, and Wiltshires, all behaving like heroes—indeed it is invidious to name battalions, for there is not one that did not do its duty to the very utmost. The Grenadiers and Scots Guards were in reserve on the 10th and part of the 11th, and during that night moved forward for the attack on the following day; but there was some loss of direction in the dark, which brought them under heavy fire in the open as soon as the day dawned, so their losses have been heavy in proportion to what they were actually able to accomplish. I hear, also, stories of some of our shells falling among the Grenadiers. That may be true, and has, no doubt, happened in several instances; but it is difficult with a battery of two hundred and eighty guns to prevent mistakes in range and direction.

"The attack on Neuve Chapelle will do much good

as an example for others to follow, and for the purpose, particularly, of showing the Allies that we do not intend to sit in our trenches for ever. The French have felt that we were not pulling our weight; now they know that we are, for we have accomplished in three days as much as they have done in five months at Perthes."[1]

The rejoicing in the success of the first attack was quickly followed by reaction. Great—too great—expectations had been formed; the cavalry had been ordered up to press through as soon as the infantry and guns had opened the way, and when no way was opened, and the tale of casualties, over 15,000, came in, criticism and recrimination followed. The prime difficulty of attack in trench warfare, that of getting up reserves at the right time to the right place, had not been appreciated. There had been delay in confirming the success of the first day, and Rawlinson, who at first was disposed to blame one of his subordinates for this, was in turn blamed by Sir John French.

"*March* 17.—I visited the German trenches to-day at Neuve Chapelle, and was not much impressed by their appearance. They showed little skill in construction, and were filthily dirty. We had some experiments in wire-cutting to-day. After the experiments, Douglas Haig took me aside, and told me that Sir John was furious with me, and said I would not accept responsibility. He quoted the attack on Menin again, which evidently still rankles in his mind, and threatened to turn me out of my Army Corps. He asked Haig if he was satisfied with the way I had commanded it, and when Haig answered 'Yes,' Sir John said that, anyway, he was not pleased.[2] Haig added that he was quite prepared to fight my battles for me, and that I might have every confidence in him. It was very good of him, and I am certain that I have a staunch ally in his strong character and personality. I told him that I was out to

[1] The French had been engaged in what Joffre called "a campaign of nibbling" at Perthes in Champagne.

[2] Sir John French in his dispatch of April 5, 1915, said: "I am of opinion that this delay would not have occurred had the clearly expressed order of the General Officer Commanding First Army been more carefully observed. The difficulties above enumerated might have been overcome at an earlier period of the day if the General Officer Commanding the IVth Corps had been able to bring his reserve brigade more speedily to action."

beat the Germans and that alone. If he could find someone else who would do the job better than myself, and could do more to bring about ultimate victory, I was quite ready to make way for him. There is room for everyone in this war, and, so long as we gain the ultimate victory, it matters not how or when I am employed. But I feel quite sure that I shall get justice at D.H.'s hands."

A few days later Rawlinson wrote to Sir H. Sclater: "On going into the question of the delay in pressing on the first day, I found it was as much my fault as anyone's. It is easy to be wise after the event, and if I had it to do again, I would keep the troops detailed to carry on the advance entirely separate from those engaged in the first assault, so that there would be no possibility of their being drawn into the fighting until the moment arrived for them to dash forward. On this occasion the reserve brigade was absorbed in the assault on the front line of trenches, so that, when required to go on, it took time to collect it, and it was, in consequence, late. But we are learning the tactics which this trench warfare teaches, and on each occasion we shall improve on our methods."

While the general opinion amongst commanders, both French and British, on the Western front was that Neuve Chapelle had shown that, given a sufficiency of guns and shell of the right type, it was possible to break through the German lines, Rawlinson was amongst the first to appreciate the true lessons of the battle. "The experience of Neuve Chapelle," he wrote to Major Wigram, on March 25, "has taught us all a great deal, and I hope that next time we have enough ammunition to undertake a similar enterprise, we shall remember what experience has taught us. The losses are the feature most to be deplored. The great majority occurred on the second and third days, in attacking the enemy's defended pivots and houses. These losses might all have been avoided if we had been content with the capture of the village itself, instead of persisting in pressing on in order to get the cavalry through. I confess that this idea does not appeal to me. The cavalry will, I fear, do no good when they go through, for they are certain to be held up by wire and trenches in whatever

direction they may attempt to go. The enemy are not yet sufficiently demoralized to hunt them with cavalry. We must wait before that happy state of affairs supervenes. What we want to do now is what I call, 'bite and hold.' Bite off a piece of the enemy's line, like Neuve Chapelle, and hold it against counter-attack. The bite can be made without much loss, and, if we choose the right place and make every preparation to put it quickly into a state of defence, there ought to be no difficulty in holding it against the enemy's counter-attacks, and in inflicting on him at least twice the loss that we have suffered in making the bite. This policy, I think, we should adopt all along the line. It would keep up the spirits of the men, wear down the enemy, show the French that we are doing our part, and would avoid heavy casualties; but, of course, it entails the expenditure of a great deal of ammunition, which we have not yet got."[1]

Neuve Chapelle had been intended to be but a preliminary to a more general attack by the First Army, to which Sir John French was pledged in support of Joffre's spring campaign, and within a few days of the end of the first battle, Rawlinson was engaged in preparing for the next. In the midst of this work, Sir Thompson Capper fell ill and was invalided to England, General Hubert Gough taking his place in command of the 7th Division. Then came the first German gas attack at Ypres, and Gough had to be sent thither with two of his brigades. This all caused delay, and the attack of the First Army in the battle of Fromelles did not begin until May 9, merging into the battle of Festubert. Of the first of these battles Rawlinson wrote to Major Wigram, on May 11: "Before you receive this you will have heard that the result of our attacks the day before yesterday has not been satisfactory. The Ist, IVth and Indian Corps were all repulsed, and we stand to-day just where we did three days ago, except that we have lost 10,000 officers and men in the First Army, and expended a very large amount of artillery ammunition. But we have,

[1] The "bite and hold" policy, officially termed the "attack with limited objective," was generally adopted on the Western front, two and a half years later, in the latter part of 1917.

at least, learned that the policy of 'storm and follow on' cannot successfully be conducted unless the front of attack is wide, and the bombardment is continued for considerably longer than half an hour. In this respect the French have certainly taught us a lesson, for they shelled the front which they attacked for the whole of the day before. What exactly happened in front of the Ist and Indian Corps I do not know. The IVth Corps penetrated the enemy's line at three points; but the battalions that succeeded in gaining a footing at the first rush were unable to work along the line of trenches in order to join up with their friends on their flanks, and it was impossible to reinforce them, owing to the intensity of the fire of rifles and machine-guns which swept the open ground between the two lines of trenches.

"It had been the instruction to push on rapidly through the first line, and gain as much ground as possible, and the 2nd Rifle Brigade and the Royal Irish Rifles did succeed in getting through the second line of trenches; but the machine-gun fire on their flanks, coupled with a strong counter-attack in front, caused very heavy casualties in both these heroic battalions, and forced them back. The assault was carried out by the 24th and 25th Brigades, commanded by Brigadier-Generals Cole and Oxley. The former was, unfortunately, killed when leading his brigade. He had gone forward to push in reinforcements, and was standing on a parapet encouraging his men, when he was mortally wounded. He is a very great loss to the brigade, and to the 8th Division, and has now been succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel Stevens, who commanded the 2nd Rifle Brigade with great dash. The 13th London (Kensington Rifles) did most gallantly on the extreme left, where they dashed forward and occupied a mine crater as soon as the mine had exploded; whilst, on the right, the Northampton Regiment made good their footing in the enemy's trenches by a spirited dash forward as soon as the bombardment had ceased. Both these battalions were eventually driven out again, owing to the impossibility of getting reinforcements up to them.

"What is most to be deplored is that with all this

gallantry and sacrifice of life we have only proved that the methods adopted for the attack were too ambitious."

One of the consequences of the failure at Fromelles is recorded by Sir John French in his "1914." He says:

"I immediately gave instructions that evidence should be furnished to Colonel Repington, military correspondent of *The Times*, who happened to be then at Head-quarters, that the vital need of high-explosive shells had been a fatal bar to any success on that day. I directed that copies of all correspondence which had taken place between myself and the Government on the question of the supply of ammunition be made at once; and I sent my secretary, Brinsley Fitzgerald, with Captain Frederick Guest, one of my A.D.C.s, to England with instructions that these proofs should be laid before Mr. Lloyd George, who has already shown me, by his special interest in the subject, that he grasped the deadly nature of our necessities. I instructed also that they should be laid before Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Arthur Balfour, whose sympathetic understanding of my difficulties, when they visited me in France, had led me to expect that they would take the action that the grave exigency demanded."

Sir John's action contributed to the creation of the political crisis which brought about the formation of a Coalition Government, and also led to a virulent attack upon Lord Kitchener. Of the latter, Rawlinson wrote in furious indignation to Colonel Fitzgerald. "This attack on K. is perfectly monstrous, and has raised us out here to a pitch of fury. It is a diabolical plot, the ins and outs of which you probably know much better than I do; but what I like least about it is that it should come on top of Repington's visit out here, and his article on the H.E. shell.

"The true cause of our failures is that our tactics have been faulty, and that we have misconceived the strength and resisting power of the enemy. To turn round and say that the casualties have been due to the want of H.E. shells for the 18-pounders is a perversion of the truth. It is a shortage of heavy guns and howitzers, rather than a lack of H.E. shells for the 18-pounders, that we suffer from.

Most of the casualties have occurred, not in taking the first trenches, but in assaulting the keeps behind the front line, where the Germans have been dug in with their machine-guns cunningly concealed. It is abundantly clear, as I always suspected, that our present shortage of ammunition is attributable to our methods before the war, rather than to the procedure that has taken place since the war began. As you know, the manufacture of shell, whether H.E. or shrapnel, is a highly technical art, and cannot be improvised at a moment's notice by any bicycle firm that may be commandeered for the work. We are not alone in the difficulties regarding ammunition. The French, during their attack on Arras a fortnight ago, burst no fewer than forty-four of their heavy guns; all accidents being due to shells bursting in the bore because of faulty manufacture. If such a thing had happened to us, with our limited supply of guns, we should now be facing disaster. The general feeling out here is one of intense disgust at the initiation of a Press attack when all should be working in combination against the enemy."

The failure of the spring campaign gave rise to gloomy forebodings at home, but it did not in the least affect Rawlinson's reasoned confidence in the ultimate issue. "I cannot help thinking," he wrote to a correspondent, who had confessed sadly that he could see no light breaking through the clouds, "that you take too unfavourable a view of the situation. I remember in Ladysmith, when things were looking blackest, I went to see Wools-Sampson, who lay wounded in a dug-out in the Klip River bed. The doctors were trying to persuade him to have his leg off. He at once got very angry and said: 'I won't have my leg cut off. I mean to recover and, what is more, I mean to lead my regiment into Pretoria.' The doctors smiled and turned away; but Wools-Sampson carried out his intentions to the letter. Now I feel very much as he did after an attack which has failed, for I am absolutely confident that the Allies will prevail, just as they did one hundred years ago. No nation which has raised the armies of the world against her, as Germany has, can possibly come out victorious in the end, no matter what temporary success

she may win. History is one long demonstration of that. I admit that, at the moment, things do not look very well for us, but this summer is Germany's last chance. If she cannot do something really decisive before next October, she must eventually go under, and no success that she can obtain against Russia will suffice, even if she captures both Lemberg and Warsaw. She is now fighting nations that were unprepared for the war, and it will take a year or more to make up for the lack of preparation, both on our part and that of our Allies. But we will do it, and the longer the war goes on the more certain will be the Allied victory. We are all fighting for democratic ideals and the cause of freedom, and in the end right will triumph over might."

A final attempt to assist Foch in his attack on the Vimy Ridge was made by the IVth Corps on June 15. An attack was launched upon the Rue d'Ouvert on the Givenchy front, but was no more successful than those of Fromelles or Festubert: "The artillery bombardment," Rawlinson wrote to Lord Derby, on June 21, "was very accurate, and in ordinary circumstances would, no doubt, have shaken the Germans sufficiently for our infantry to succeed; but in this case the Germans have deep dug-outs at the bottom of their trenches, into which they retired during the bombardment. In these they were safe from the heavy shell, so that, when our infantry advanced, the Germans simply lined the parapets and shot our men down as soon as they started the assault. In a few places the attack succeeded in getting the German lines; but we did not get enough men forward to make good the ground captured, and when night came the Germans hunted out the small parties of gallant men who had forced their way forward. The 1st Canadians fought splendidly, and so did some of the Territorial battalions of the 51st Division, especially the 8th King's Liverpool and the 6th Scottish Rifles. The 4th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment did first-class work in charging the hostile trenches with great spirit; but they were not sufficiently expert with their bombs to retain possession of the ground which they had captured, and by midnight they had been forced back again. The end is still a very long way off. We must use all our efforts to arm, and

we shall not have done that until we introduce conscription. It may be quite true that at the present time we have not the arms, clothing and equipment for larger numbers than at present engaging, but that will not be the case in the autumn, and we should lay our plans with the object of introducing compulsory service for all in October."

The attack on the Rue d'Ouvert ended the campaign of the First Army which had begun at Fromelles six weeks before; and for the next three months Rawlinson was kept busy with changes in the composition of his corps, with experiments in the methods of countering the German gas attacks, and with plans for the use of gas on our own account. In the leisure moments which these activities left him, he again surveyed the war as a whole, in the light of the experiences of the spring campaign. The arrival of reinforcements in France, and the diversion of the German reserves to the Eastern front, had removed his anxieties for the safety of our lines in the West; and, like every other experienced soldier, he was longing for the Allies to gain the initiative, to secure the power of dictating to the enemy the military policy of the war. How was this to be done? At the end of June he wrote: "Admitted that the lines in the West are, at present, impregnable to both sides, does this mean a final stalemate? I think not. It seems to me that the ideal would be a combined campaign against Austria. But, if such a plan were decided upon, the Allied army could not be assembled before the end of September at the earliest, and this leaves ample time for Germany to do much mischief. She may come and attack us here on the Western front, in order to have one more try to gain Calais and Boulogne. This would probably suit us best, for she would lose more men in so doing than in any other plan she could adopt. She is more likely to elect to turn her victorious armies against Serbia, with the object of smashing her for ever, and of so intimidating the other Balkan states that there would be no risk of their joining the Allies. The success of this plan would prevent us from reaching Constantinople, and a failure there would have a marked effect on the Mohammedan world. It is difficult to see the correct answer to

this Serbian plan. I believe that, as I have said, the best would be a campaign in Austria, but how exactly it is to be brought about I cannot at present see. The first two steps are to clear the Adriatic of hostile vessels, and to take Constantinople before Germany attacks Serbia. When these are accomplished we can begin to talk of something else. K. has already sent three divisions of his First Army to the East, and there is no reason why he should not send the whole of the Second Army; but it would be wiser to take some of the experienced troops and commanders from here in exchange for new divisions.[1] We must act quickly if the Germans are not to dictate our policy for us. What we most need is an agreed military policy for the whole of the Allies, but it seems evident that the politicians, both in England and France, are gaining increasing influence in the conduct of the war, which is very bad, and may have very serious consequences, for no politician ever won a campaign. We want another Napoleon, but there is no sign of one arising at present. It is the control of the strategical policy which is most at fault in this great war. We began the attack on the Dardanelles before we were safe in the West, and in the wrong way, and now we are going to attack here before that job is more than half begun. Until the Allies raise a really big man I fear matters will not improve." [2]

From this it will be seen that Rawlinson had no desire to go on hammering at the German trenches until our resources, particularly in material, had greatly increased. But the British Government had promised Joffre that his autumn campaign, from which he expected great things, should be actively supported in the West; so, in August,

[1] Curiously enough, just about the time when this was written, Sir Ian Hamilton was writing to Kitchener that he wanted men, "of good stiff constitution and nerve," as corps commanders for Gallipoli. "I can think of two men, Byng and Rawlinson." "Gallipoli Diary," Vol. I, p. 303.

[2] This was written on June 20, 1915. On Oct. 6, the Austro-German armies began the invasion of Serbia, which opened the road from Germany to Constantinople. The three divisions of the First Kitchener Army went to the Dardanelles, but their departure was delayed by the change of Government, and the attack which Sir Ian Hamilton had planned for July did not take place till August. It is at least possible that a determined effort in July to clear the Gallipoli peninsula might have been successful; but, in August, the Government decided to support the French autumn campaign on the Western front, and there was consequently a division of aim and of force.

came the news that the First Army was to relieve the French troops on its right—the IVth Corps taking over the lines opposite Loos—and this was followed by the further news that an attack on Loos was to form a part of the autumn campaign. On August 12, Brigadier-General A. Montgomery came to Rawlinson as his Chief of the General Staff, and thus renewed an association which continued, with but one brief break, increasing in intimacy and confidence, while the war lasted, and was ended only by death. Rawlinson was no more impressed than was Sir John French,[1] with the facilities for attack which the country round Loos presented. "My new front is as flat as the palm of my hand. Hardly any cover anywhere. The lines are in many places three hundred yards apart. Easy enough to hold defensively, but very difficult for attack. It will take us all our time to take Hill 70.[2] D.H. tells me that we are to attack 'au fond,' that the French are doing likewise and making a supreme effort. It will cost us dearly, and we shall not get very far."

However, the fiat had gone forth that the attack was to be made, and Rawlinson threw himself into the preparations for it with his usual energy. Those preparations were complicated by the fact that, for the first time, we were to use gas and smoke screens. Then, too, the first divisions of the new armies had to be schooled in their rôle in battle. The 15th Division was allotted to the IVth Corps, and of it Rawlinson wrote to Lord Kitchener, on August 6: "You will be interested to hear something of the 15th Division, which has lately joined my corps and has now taken over a section of the front line. You will remember that it is commanded by McCracken,[3] and is the Highland Division. It is shaping most satisfactorily. The men are, I fancy, the best that have come out of the Highlands, and I never saw finer battalions than the 6th and 7th Camerons and the 8th Seaforths. What has struck me most is the

[1] The British Commander-in-Chief had been opposed to the idea of attacking Loos, but yielded on the instructions of the Government that he was to support Joffre's plans.

[2] A small rise in the ground east of Loos. It was important because of the flatness of the surrounding country.

[3] Now Lieutenant-General Sir F. W. McCracken.

stamp of company officers, which is far better than I had expected; and the pioneer battalion, in the shape of the 9th Gordons, has proved excellent, both in the way of trench construction and as a fighting unit."

There was added, in this case, to the anxieties which inevitably precede any battle, the doubt whether the wind would be favourable for the use of the gas; whether the enemy would discover that cylinders were being taken up into the trenches, and would burst them by shell-fire before the gas could be released. Both these doubts were resolved when the battle of Loos began early on the morning of September 25. The result of the first attack roused high hopes, but these were dashed when, again, the reserves failed to appear in time to confirm the success of the assault.

"The use of gas," Rawlinson wrote, on September 28, "was entirely dependent on the wind. The weather was anything but propitious. An east wind had been blowing for some days, but on the 24th the weather looked like changing, and, though rain fell during the night 24–25th, the wind was in the south with a slight touch of westerly.

"At 1 a.m. on the night of the 24–25th, Sir Douglas Haig had to make the grave decision as to whether the attack should proceed or whether it should be postponed. His weather expert, who is in touch with the meteorological forecasts both in France and England, came to the conclusion that there was more chance of a south-west wind on the morning of the 25th than there would be on the 26th; and, our French allies being very anxious that we should deliver our attack on the morning of the 25th, it was wisely decided that it should take place as already arranged.

"The morning of the 25th broke with a cloudy sky and a slight drizzle, but with the wind distinctly west of south, and when the gas was released at 4.50 a.m., it gradually drifted towards the German trenches. I witnessed the sight from the top of a fosse some three miles distant from the front line, and the view before me was one I shall never forget. Gradually a huge cloud of white and yellow

gas rose from our trenches to a height between two hundred and three hundred feet, and floated quietly away towards the German trenches. Amidst the cloud could be seen shrapnel bursting on the enemy's front line trenches, whilst, on the southern portion of the front, huge volumes of white smoke created by the phospher bombs, which had been thrown against the enemy from our trench mortars, rose three hundred feet in the air and gradually drifted away to the east.

"At 5.30 a.m. precisely, the assaulting columns left our trenches, and dashed against the enemy's line. They were successful at all points, except on the right of the 1st Division, where, owing to the configuration of the ground, some gas drifted back, and about two hundred men and five officers of the 60th Rifles were overcome by the fumes. The assault at this point failed. The 15th Division, who were in the centre, well supported by our artillery, rushed straight on through the village of Loos, over Hill 70, and to Cité St. Auguste. The 47th Division, on the right, charging forward with equal dash, gained possession of all the objectives that had been allotted to them, and formed a flank covering the right of the 15th Division. The 1st Division, delayed by the failure of their 2nd Brigade to penetrate the enemy's line, did not get so far in their first rush, and it was some hours before the reserve battalions could be detached to attack the enemy's front line trenches from the rear, which were holding up the 2nd Brigade. It was 3 or 4 p.m. before they could effect this, and force the Germans holding on there to surrender. At this point they captured between six hundred and seven hundred prisoners.

"There can be no question that the enemy was surprised by the vigour of the first rush, and had it been adequately supported by the 21st and 24th Divisions, who were ready at Noeux-Les-Mines for the purpose, it is probable that we should already have gained possession of the enemy's second system of defences about Hulluch and Cité St. Auguste. The 21st and 24th Divisions were, however, unduly delayed. They had been retained in G.H.Q. reserve, and were not handed over to the First Army until about

10 a.m.[1] It took them some two hours to get under way, and, owing to various circumstances, they did not reach the battlefield until late in the afternoon, with the result that they were unable to take part in any action on the 25th. The 1st and 15th Divisions, which advanced against the villages of Hulluch and Cité St. Auguste, actually entered these places, and penetrated the enemy's third line, but were forced to withdraw in the evening owing to want of adequate support by the 21st and 24th Divisions.

"During the night of the 25–26th, arrangements were made for the 1st Division to attack Hulluch again, and for the 21st and 24th Divisions to advance, via Puits 14, against the enemy's third system of defences, at and north of Cité St. Auguste.

"The assault was to be delivered at 11 a.m., and, from what I can ascertain, some part of these divisions did actually reach the enemy's trenches, for their bodies can now be seen on the barbed wire. Hostile artillery and machine-gun fire were, however, turned on to them from the flanks as they advanced, the effect of which, upon troops in action for the first time, proved disastrous. The whole of these two divisions, spread out, as they were, over the open plain and subjected to considerable punishment from the enemy's artillery, turned and retired in one huge mass to our original line of trenches, and on to the neighbourhood of Vermelles and Philosophe, before they could be rallied. The attack had failed disastrously. I am told that the arrangements for feeding and watering these troops were far from good, and that they were sent into action without having had their morning meal, and after a series of long and trying marches all the way from St. Omer.

"It is very much to be regretted that these two new divisions could not have been brought to the battlefield fresh, and in time to take full advantage of the first assault, delivered by the IVth Corps, without giving the enemy

[1] In a note dated November 7, Rawlinson wrote: "Sir John says in his Loos dispatch that he placed the 21st and 24th Divisions at Haig's disposal at 9.30 a.m., and the Guards Division on the morning of the 26th. In point of fact, the 21st and 24th Divisions were not put under Haig's orders till they passed our front line trenches, which was not until late in the afternoon. Several hours later than I had supposed. The Guards Division was not given to Haig till the afternoon of the 26th. Someone ought to have looked up the facts for French."

time to concentrate against them. Had this been done, and had they delivered their attack between 10 and 12 on the morning of the 25th, I am quite certain that they would have been successful, and that we should have broken through the enemy's second system of defences, and been able to send the cavalry on to Pont-à-Vendin and Carvin.

"I am told that the delay was primarily due to Sir John's desire to keep these two divisions in G.H.Q. reserve until the last possible moment.[1] There can be no doubt that this moment was too long delayed; and it is doubly to be regretted that this was the case, for, in his communiqué to the French Army, General Joffre laid special stress upon the need for all reserve formations to be well up, and to move forward to the attack at the same time as the assault is delivered. We were all given to understand that this would be the case, and we made our plans accordingly.[2]

"These brief notes have been dictated in the midst of a host of other work, and merely represent my recollections of what actually took place. No official report has, of course, yet been sent in, but I should judge that the casualties in the Ist, IVth and XIth Corps must be between 40,000 and 50,000. It is doubtful if the enemy's casualties have reached this number, though their loss in material and prestige has been very considerable.

[1] Sir J. French said in his dispatch of October 15: "In view of the great length of line along which the British Army was operating, it was necessary to keep a strong reserve in my own hand. The XIth Corps, consisting of the Guards, the 21st and 24th Divisions, were detailed for this purpose. This reserve was the more necessary owing to the fact that the Tenth French Army had to postpone its attack until one o'clock on Thursday."

[2] This criticism of the delay in sending forward the reserves in support of an attack which attempted to break the German defences in a rush may appear inconsistent with Rawlinson's advocacy of the "bite and hold" methods of attack. While it is true that Rawlinson believed that a limited attack was the most suitable, he was always ready to subordinate his personal views and to carry out loyally the plan decided on by his superiors. In the battle of Loos he did everything possible to make the rush through, which was the plan of the First Army, successful. His point is that there were two mutually inconsistent plans; one, that of our G.H.Q., the other, that of the First Army, of which his IVth Corps formed a part. The British attack on Loos was but a part of Joffre's general scheme. Joffre had decided on the bombardment and rush method, and to this our First Army had agreed to conform. Rawlinson had, therefore, made all his plans on the supposition that the reserves would follow immediately his attacking troops. Naturally he was bitterly disappointed when he found that Sir John French's plan of battle was entirely different from that which he had been led to believe would be adopted, and when he realized that the lives of his men had been vainly sacrificed owing to a change of which he was not aware until too late.

"As regards the future, past experience shows that after the first heavy fighting it is very difficult with tired troops to make any substantial progress, and I much doubt whether in the next few days we shall be able to force our way through the defences which the enemy are now busily constructing in our front. For, in addition to those which he is now making in close contact with our present front line, he has a strong supporting line in rear of it, running from Cité St. Auguste through Hulluch to Haisnes. This line is thoroughly wired up, has been furnished with deep dug-outs, concrete machine-gun emplacements and continuous barbed wire obstacles, all of which were made before we delivered our attack on the 25th. Had we been able to support our first rush on the 25th, which gained possession of this line at two points, viz, Hulluch and Cité St. Auguste, we should have succeeded, I think, in reaching Pont-à-Vendin and getting our cavalry through; but the delay in the advance of the 21st and 24th Divisions let slip a golden opportunity which is not, in my opinion, likely to occur again in the near future."

As Rawlinson had predicted, the battle of Loos petered out in a series of costly local attacks and counter-attacks which effected little change in the position. As he had also predicted, the Germans attacked Serbia.

"*October 10.*—Henry Wilson came over with Arthur Lee[1] to lunch, and Bendor also turned up. Henry full of news. Kitchener has agreed to send five or six divisions to Salonika. Joffre has promised to send two divisions. It is a wild-cat scheme, for Greece is quite likely to turn against us, and we cannot get up the railway in time to help the Serbians. We might possibly have done some good in June or early in July; but we are again too late, as we were at Antwerp. The Germans have brought the Bulgars into the war for this very purpose, so that we may spend our energies in killing their allies. I hope and pray they won't send me out there. We missed our chance of an Eastern campaign this summer, and the one thing to do now is to concentrate on the Western front."

As the winter drew in, the gossips were busy with talk

[1] Now Lord Lee of Fareham.

of impending changes of the command in France, and of plans for strengthening the General Staff at the War Office. The latter measure Rawlinson had been urging for some time upon his correspondents, and no one was more pleased when it came about.

"*December 13.*—Robertson came over to see me. He gave me a most interesting and amusing account of his doings lately at the various conferences which he had attended in London and in Paris. He tells me that the Salonika business has been influenced all through by the political position of Sarrail, and that it was that influence which first took the French there and then dragged us in.

"The most satisfactory news that he gave me was that he and K. understand each other perfectly, and that he, Robertson, is going home to-morrow to be C.I.G.S. He says that K. has disclosed his whole position to him, and that they have come to a complete agreement. Robertson fully realizes the value of K.'s name and prestige in the country, and he intends to do his utmost to preserve and use both to the fullest possible extent. The *rapprochement* between these two strong characters is the best thing that has happened for a long time, for as long as they hang together we may be certain that there will be a marked improvement in the strategical conduct of the war. Sir John is to go home shortly, and to be succeeded by Douglas Haig. I gather from a reference that Robertson made, as he walked out of the door, to my changing my residence shortly, that I am to succeed Douglas Haig."

Within a few days, Rawlinson learned that the command of the First Army had been promised to Sir Charles Monro on his return from the East, whither he had gone to advise upon and supervise the evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. He, himself, was to take temporarily the command of the First Army, and on Monro's arrival was to create and command the Fourth Army. The close of the year, therefore, found Rawlinson established at Hinges in charge of the First Army.

CHAPTER VIII

1916: THE CREATION OF THE FOURTH ARMY: THE SOMME

EARLY in the new year, Rawlinson wrote to a friend: "Here I am in charge of the First Army, keeping Monro's place warm for him. I am very pleased to do so, for he has done splendid work in getting away from Gallipoli with such surprisingly little loss, and deserves any and every honour he may receive. The First Army is having what we call a quiet time; that is to say, we only get rid of 20,000 rounds of artillery ammunition a day, and have from 100 to 200 casualties. Mine warfare is, however, in full swing; the Boches sprung five mines last night under a point of our line called the 'Hair Pin,' which is close to the Quarries, and put in some heavy artillery fire. We replied, and there was a ding-dong artillery battle for a couple of hours, but neither side sent forward their infantry. So the underground warfare continues, and progress is measured by feet instead of miles. It will take us some time to reconquer Belgium at this rate. We must be prepared to have to fight throughout 1917, and for that we must have men. In this army the daily wastage of sick amounts to about 250, and the total weekly casualties average 2,500. We are already 40,000 men below establishment, and I do not suppose that the Second and Third Armies are much better off. It is, therefore, refreshing to hear that the Cabinet has agreed to compulse the young unmarried men.

"In spite of what you may think to be a heavy sick-roll, the health of the troops is wonderfully good and their spirit excellent; but we sadly miss the many trained and reliable officers who have passed away during the last year. The new ones, though capital fellows, are mostly very young and inexperienced. They know nothing of tactics above ground, or of map-reading or anything of that sort;

so we have instituted divisional and brigade schools for their special education. Each corps has a division in reserve, whilst two hold the front lines, so at least a third of the army is busy training at a time. In this way we ought to be able to produce an efficient fighting machine by the spring, for warfare either above or below ground. It means constant hard work, but D.H. knows how important it is. He has instituted weekly conferences of Army commanders, to take place every Saturday at each of the Army head-quarters in turn. This will bring the armies into much closer touch than has hitherto been the case.

"You need have no anxiety as to D.H. getting on well with our Allies. He went down to Chantilly the other day, and had a most cordial meeting with 'Père Joffre.' He expected to be with him about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, but Joffre kept him an hour and a half. He has since gone down again to be present at the meeting of army group commanders and talk over future plans. So I think our co-operation in the future will be much closer than it has been.

"The new staff at G.H.Q. have to shake into their places. But they are all such good friends, and the operations section is composed of such capable officers, that it will not be long before business is running smoothly. Kiggell,[1] as Chief of the Staff, is new to the country and, of course, has a good deal to pick up; but Butler,[2] his Sub-Chief, knows the whole thing inside out and will be a great help to him. Davidson,[3] who becomes Brigadier-General, General Staff, has a wide experience and is a first-rate staff officer. Altogether, I am happy about the changes out here and at home. Douglas Haig will make a first-rate C.-in-C., for he thoroughly understands the tactical and strategical requirements of this Western theatre of war, and possesses the strength of character to assure that his policy is carried out. I am equally sure that Kitchener and Robertson will go well in double harness at home.

[1] Now Lieutenant-General Sir L. Kiggell. He became Chief of the Staff in France on Sir W. Robertson's appointment as C.I.G.S.
[2] Now Lieutenant-General Sir R. Butler.
[3] Now Major-General Sir J. Davidson, M.P.

I observe two prominent articles in *The Times*, calling for a controlling mind to direct and co-ordinate the various operations in the East. This indicates that the campaign to get rid of K. is still alive. But we want to make full use of his great name and influence in the country. We have only to stick to our own purpose, and avoid repeating the deplorable mistakes of strategy that we have made in the past year, in order to be assured of ultimate victory."

Sir Charles Monro arrived at the beginning of February, and Rawlinson at once set about the creation of the Fourth Army:

"*February 5.*—To-day the Fourth Army is born; may it have a successful and glorious career! At present I have only collected about a dozen officers for Army Head-quarters, and we are now squeezed into a small but clean château, which was occupied by the 17th Division. I have here now Archie Montgomery, as my Chief of the Staff, with Pitt Taylor, Luckock and Vivian, as the General Staff; Sutton and May are the Administrative Staff. 'Curly' Birch is the Artillery, and Buckland the Engineer commander. O'Keefe is my chief medical officer, and Parker our camp commandant. The latter is invaluable, as usual, and full of hard work in getting things in order. This promises to be a very good team." And so it proved to be. Rawlinson's method in choosing men was to test them thoroughly, and when he had proved them to back them through thick and thin. This his staff soon discovered, and no man was ever more devotedly served. The group of men he collected for the head-quarters of his army became his military family, and served him with few changes for the next three years.[1] They formed a band of brothers knit together every whit as closely as that which Nelson created; and the leader could say truly after the war was over: "No commander has ever been better served by his staff, and I know that, in the opinion of the Corps and Divisional commanders who served in the Fourth Army during this momentous period, the Army staff won the

[1] In May, 1916, General Birch went to G.H.Q., and was succeeded as Artillery adviser by General Budworth. A little later, General Sutton gave way to General Holman as head of the Administrative Staff. There were few other important changes.

respect and affection of the lower formations by their helpfulness and consideration in times of sunshine and cloud."[1]

It happened that, in August, 1916, I accompanied Mr. Lloyd George on his first visit to the Western front after he became Secretary of State for War. We arrived at the head-quarters of the Fourth Army in the midst of the battle of the Somme, and spent some hours there. Mr. Lloyd George was deeply interested in the organization of the office, and in the machinery for commanding an army in battle. His first remark on leaving was: "Well, that looks like a workshop." A very efficient workshop it was, and it was the more efficient because the workmen were inspired by the cheerful energy of their leader, who never allowed them to forget that in war the human element counts far more than any other. It is no mean achievement to inspire an army of some 500,000 men, constantly changing, with a special pride and spirit of its own, but this was achieved; and the spirit, carefully created with toil of heart and head, withstood alike the temptations of victory, the stress of failure, and the dull monotony of inaction. The Fourth Army learned to love its chief as the Tenth Legion learned to love Cæsar.

The nature of British discipline has always been a puzzle to foreign observers. Time was when officers of continental armies were horrified at the sight of officers playing games on equal terms with their men, though of recent years our example in this is being largely copied; but I fancy that, even to-day, the alumni of continental war schools would not believe it possible for a staff officer to poke fun at his chief without committing professional suicide. It happened that Captain F. O. Langley, who delighted the readers of *Punch* with his witty letters from the front, addressed to "My dear Charles," joined the staff of the Fourth Army. In April, 1917, when the retreat of the Germans to the Hindenburg Line was well developed, it became necessary to move the head-quarters of the army nearer to the front. The business of shifting the nerve-centre from which the activities of a great army were controlled, and of re-establishing it in a district in which almost every

[1] Foreword to "The Story of the Fourth Army," p. x.

building had been razed to the ground, and the roads obliterated, was amusingly described by Captain Langley in one of his letters in which the "Invaluable Parker" figures prominently.

"My Dear Charles,

If I was called upon to move a busy community from one village to another, and if the village was discovered upon inquiry not to be there, I should ask for ten to twelve months to do it in. The camp commandant asked for a fortnight, hoping to get ten days; he got a week. 'It is now the 31st. We should move to the new place about the 7th,' said the Highest Authority. 'Let it be April 7th.' Thus April 7th became permanently and irrevocably fixed. For everybody except the C.C. and his accomplices the thing was as good as done. The ultimatum went forth at 10 a.m. At noon the same day the period of unrest for the C.C. was well set in. Every department learning by instinct what was forward, forthwith discovered what it had long suspected—its own immediate and paramount importance. Every department appointed a representative to go round and see the C.C. about it, another representative to write to him about it, and a third to ring him up on the telephone and go on ringing him up on the telephone about it. The only departments that kept modestly in the background were those upon which the execution of the move fell. The C.C., noting the queue of representatives at his front door and the agitation of his telephone, slipped out by the back door and went to look for the workers, and when he found them he lived with them night and day, here, there, and anywhere. . . . Be anything you like, Charles, in the military world, from a courtly general to a thrusting Loot in charge of some overwhelmingly important department or other, but do not be a camp commandant. As there is no terrible complication that may not occur in the life of such, so there is no bitter irony that may not follow. The early afternoon of April 6 found the C.C. on the site of the new camp, surrounded by confusion and

an angry crowd of experts. There had been words and more words, there had only just not been blows, all with regard to this wretched and constant subject of April 7th. The C.C., never broad-minded on this point, had become positively ridiculous and tiresome about that irrevocable date of April 7th. It was a dull subject in any case, said the experts, but, in the circumstances, it was inane and cruel to go on insisting on it. R.E. Lorries, Signals, and all their suites, not having been on too friendly terms among themselves these latter days, were fast becoming united in their intense loathing of the C.C. and the everlasting and impossible April 7th.

"At this moment, the Highest Authority itself arrived on the scene to have a look at it. He was not in the least discontented with what he saw; he was inclined to congratulate the experts on their expedition.

"'We shall be hard put to it, sir,' said the C.C., 'to be ready for to-morrow.'

"'To-morrow,' said the Highest Authority, 'why to-morrow particularly?'

"'To-morrow is the 7th, sir,' said the C.C. with sinister emphasis.

"'And what about it, if it is?' asked the Highest Authority.

"'We have to move in here on April 7th, sir,' said the C.C., with almost an injured tone in his voice.

"'Have you?' said the Highest Authority. 'Why?'

"The experts saluted and moved off, commenting quietly among themselves upon the good sense and magnanimity of the Highest Authority.

"As for that Camp Commandant . . . .

"Yours ever,

"HENRY."

No one chuckled more heartily over this than "the Highest Authority," whose cheerful confidence and keen sense of humour set the tone to his head-quarters, and were a priceless asset.

The head-quarters of the Fourth Army was not created in a day, and the army itself grew gradually. It began as a Reserve Army, composed of a corps from the reserve of each of the other three armies; and its special mission was to be ready to reinforce any part of the front. Rawlinson, therefore, began his work by making a detailed study of the position of the Second and Third Armies, and of the Belgian and French lines on our flanks. That he did this with some thoroughness is clear from a letter which he wrote to General du Cane in the middle of February:

"I am travelling round the whole of that part of the front line which I do not know already, and am taking Archie Montgomery and 'Curly' Birch with me. During the last few days we have been doing the French and Belgian fronts between Ypres and the sea, and a very interesting time we have had of it. On Saturday, when we were in the French trenches at Hetsas, we came in for a real good strafing by the Germans. Trench mortars, ·77's and 4·2 howitzers were going strong to the tune of forty to fifty shells a minute, and it was more than a joke getting back through the barrage, along a communication trench which only gave three or four foot of cover. Archie Montgomery and 'Curly' Birch, each measuring well over two metres, found it particularly uncomfortable, and 'Curly' kept murmuring, 'If this is being C.R.A. to an army, let me go back to a corps.' However, we got through without damage, except that Butler, who was with us, slipped on one of the trench boards and sprained his ankle."

A day or two later there came a check to the creation of the Fourth Army, and the first intimation of the plan of the battle of the Somme:

"*February 18.*—Yesterday, after breakfast, I went into St. Omer to see the Commander-in-Chief, and had nearly an hour and a half's discussion with him and Kiggell.[1] I first gave him my report of what I had seen on the front, and when I had finished he proceeded to unfold his plans for the immediate future. He wants to put me under Allenby, to take charge of three or four corps for an attack

[1] Sir Launcelot Kiggell was then Chief of the General Staff.

between the Somme and the Ancre. So the Fourth Army will have to wait a bit, and I shall go back to the IVth Corps. I am quite agreeable, and told D.H. that I had no feelings about seniority or anything of that sort. The matter of Allenby's seniority over me can easily be arranged by making him a temporary general."[1]

However, the enemy intervened. On February 21, the battle of Verdun began with a serious reverse to French arms, and Joffre asked Haig to help him by extending the British front, so that the French reserves might be increased. This meant the indefinite postponement of the contemplated attack by the Allies in the West. As more troops came from England and from Egypt, the formation of the Fourth Army went ahead, and it went into the line to extend the British front as far south as the Somme. On March 1, Rawlinson was established at Querrieu, near Amiens, in command of the new army. "The Fourth Army is getting on well," Rawlinson wrote to Lord Kitchener on March 9. "We have taken over the line south of the Third Army, as far as the Somme, where we join the French. At present I have got the XIIIth Corps under Congreve, and the Xth Corps under Morland, in the Fourth Army, with the VIIIth Corps now forming under Hunter-Weston. He will have the 48th Territorial Division, the 31st Division, now in process of arrival from Egypt, and the 29th Division, which is to follow shortly. I am very glad to have the 7th Division under Watts, who looks younger than ever, back with me. It is the same stolid old 7th Division it always was, and is in Congreve's Corps. With these three corps we should be well off for troops if the Germans tried to have a go at us, but the point of junction with the French on the Somme, where they recently lost the village of Frise, is not very easy to defend. However, General Foch, who is lunching with me to-day, fully realizes this, and is putting in a good division on my right. Cavendish,[2] who was here last night, direct from Verdun, tells me that Pétain and the divisional

[1] Rawlinson's rank at this time was that of a "local general," who is junior to a "temporary general." Sir D. Haig's preparations were in accordance with the decision of a conference of the Allies held at Chantilly in November, 1915, that they should prepare for a general attack early in the spring.

[2] Colonel Cavendish of the British Mission at French Head-quarters.

commanders on the spot, as well as the troops themselves, are in good heart, and confident of being able to hold their own. I hear that Joffre has been urging us to undertake an attack in order to relieve pressure on the French. Such a step taken in a hurry would be a fatal mistake. We do not want to waste our strength in minor and premature operations, but to save up all the troops and ammunition for a really big effort in the summer, when all the Allies can strike simultaneously, and with their full power. Our new front consists of fine rolling country, rather like Salisbury Plain. It has great possibilities, and is a very pleasant change from the mud flats of Flanders."

Just as this letter was sent off, the business of getting the new army into shape was interrupted by its commander's first illness during the war.

"I went into Amiens on March 8, to present the Order of St. John of Jerusalem to two French sisters of a convent there. They had behaved splendidly when the Germans entered Amiens in August, 1914, saving some of our wounded, and concealing rifles and equipment. One of the two was the Mother Superior of the convent. I performed the ceremony with much tact, and made a short speech in French! I did not embrace the ladies, but, none the less, I caught the influenza, and have been sent away to the south of France to recover." A fortnight of Nice completely restored his health, and on March 29 he was in Paris on his way back to the front. There he met Lord Kitchener, and brought him on to the head-quarters of the Fourth Army.

"*March 30.*—I have had Lord Kitchener here all day, and he was very communicative. He is opposed to our making a big attack, and would prefer us to continue small offensives with a view solely to killing Germans. The two points which are uppermost in his mind, are:

"1. That it is highly improbable that we shall end the war this year, as the French will be unable to undertake a big offensive after Verdun. It would be unwise for us to make an attack 'au fond' by ourselves, incurring heavy casualties which could not be replaced.

"ii. That it is not desirable to call out all married men fit for service at present, for, if we do, we shall have nothing to fall back on next year. We should devote our attention to getting hold of all unmarried men from every source, and to replacing all fit men in our rearward services by partially fit men sent out from home. K. says they have already discharged over 70,000 of these from the army.

"There is a great deal in what he says, but I told him he would have to thrash it all out with D.H. The French are quite sure to urge us to attack in force, to relieve the pressure on Verdun; and it would have a very bad effect on the French public if we did little or nothing while they suffered tremendous losses. K. himself was looking very fit, far better than he did last year. K., D.H. and Wully,[1] are making an excellent team, as I knew they would. Wully is doing first-class. In fact, the military side is working so well now that I hear some of the politicians are saying it is a military dictatorship!"

Lord Kitchener's views did not prevail, and the British Army began to get ready to fight for the relief of Verdun.

From the beginning of April every day was fully occupied with the preparation of the plans and the supervision of the vast preparations for the greatest battle which the British Army had yet fought. Here is a typical day of this period of alternate deliberation and activity:

"*April 7.*—Finished off the plan for the general organization of the army for the battle. I am asking for another corps, and D.H. has promised that I shall have Horne.[2] I drew up a staff for him, and sent the names to Kiggell. Went out to the artillery and trench-mortar schools with Birch. I was pleased with both; they are doing good work, though they have only just begun. I then went on to the big ammunition reserve shed at Friselles. It is well concealed, and should not be in danger of being bombed from the air. Trenchard[3] met me at Caudas, where I went

[1] Sir William Robertson.

[2] Now General Lord Horne. He was on his way back from Egypt, having accompanied Lord Kitchener on his visit to the Dardanelles.

[3] Now Marshal of the Air, Sir Hugh Trenchard. Then in command of the Air Force in France.

round the supply stores, which are large, and very important, for they furnish all the spare parts for all the air squadrons down here. The business is very well run by Major Hudson. I also went to the railway station to look at the junction and rail-head. It is cramped and needs attention. Our railway communications generally are none too good. I have told the Director of Railways that I insist on a metre gauge line being laid from Dernacourt to Bontay Farm. After paying Morland a visit at Toutencourt, I came back to meet Joffre at 5.30 p.m. He was three-quarters of an hour late, having visited all the army commanders. He was very friendly, as usual, and spoke confidently of Verdun. He said he did not think our offensive would take place till June, unless the Boches brought it on prematurely by attacking in Russia or elsewhere. It would be a pity to hasten it, as we have still an immense deal to do. After the evening conference, I wrote out my notes for the meeting of army commanders to-morrow, and jotted down some headings for an address to the Commanding Officers School at Flixicourt."

There were many anxious discussions as to the form the battle should take. Should the bombardment be a "hurricane," intense and brief, or deliberate, and spread over a number of days? Should the objective of the assault be limited, and the attack be made in a number of steps, each carefully prepared, or should the infantry attempt in the first attack to get right up to the enemy's second system of defence? There were weighty arguments for and against each alternative. Rawlinson, who still believed whole-heartedly in his "bite and hold" theory, was in favour of deliberation, both in the bombardment and in the attack, and he supported his views with reasoned statements.

Correspondence between Rawlinson and Sir Douglas Haig, on the plans for the battle of the Somme, continued throughout the month of April. In the light of what happened in the battle, the following extracts from a letter which Rawlinson sent to G.H.Q. on April 19th are of special interest:

"*The Objectives to be attained in the first instance.*

"6. Before suggesting the limits of the first phase of the attack, I gave all the factors which affected the selection most careful consideration, after personally studying the ground, and weighing the pros and cons from every point of view.

"I came to the conclusion that two courses were open to me. The first, and most alluring one, was to attempt to capture the whole of the enemy's lines of defence as far south as the Albert-Bapaume road in one attack. The second, less ambitious, but in my opinion more certain; to divide the attack into two phases, the first of which would give us possession of the enemy's front system, and all the important tactical points between the front system and the second line. The second phase to follow as soon as possible after the first, so as to give the enemy as little time as possible to construct new defences and bring up guns and reserves.

"The first alternative, I considered, was a gamble which involved considerable risks. My reasons for this view are, briefly, as follows:

"(1) The distance to be covered by the infantry between the front system and the German second line.

"(2) The strength of the fortified villages of Pozières and Contalmaison.

"(3) The strength of the German second line, which consists of front and support trenches, and is well wired throughout.

"(4) The serious difficulty of cutting the wire in front of this line at a range of 3,000 to 4,000 yards from our front trenches.

"(5) The probability that the German reserves could man the second line before our assaulting troops could reach it.

"(6) The difficulty of supporting our infantry with artillery fire, should they gain a footing in this second line.

"(7) The fact that a very large part of the troops to be engaged are new troops with little experience, and amongst whom the standard of discipline, leadership, and

tactical training of company commanders, is not what obtained in our troops of a year ago, and amongst whom, therefore, disorganization will appear more quickly.

"7. After further consideration, it still seems to me that an attempt to attain more distant objectives—that is to say, the enemy's second line system—under the conditions above described, involves considerable risks. I, however, fully realize that it may be necessary to incur these risks in view of the importance of the object to be attained. This will, no doubt, be decided by the Commander-in-Chief, and definite instructions sent to me in due course. It is also possible that the situation may change before the attack takes place. I have, therefore, arranged in my revised plan so that, should it be decided to capture the objectives included within the green line[1] in one attack, the orders and preparations for carrying out this attack will have been prepared. On the other hand, if it is decided to carry out the attack in two phases, as originally proposed, it will only be necessary to modify the orders to a small extent.

"8. There is one further point that I would like to submit for consideration.

"Should it be found impossible to capture the enemy's second line in the first attack, and should the troops making the attack fail to gain their objective, I consider that the whole operation may be retarded to a greater extent than would occur should the attack be made in two phases as I originally proposed.

"This seems to me to be an important consideration, in view of the instructions contained in your letter No. O.A.D. 710 of the 12th of April, which indicates clearly that these operations are to be sustained over a considerable period of time.

* * * * * * *

"*The possibility of employing a comparatively short, intense, bombardment immediately preceding the assault.*

"18. The advantages claimed for a short, intense, bombardment are:

[1] i.e. the larger scheme.

"(1) Surprise.

"(2) The effect on the enemy's morale of a hurricane of shells poured upon them at a very rapid rate.

"As regards (1), it would seem very doubtful whether, in the operations under consideration, there is much, if any, prospect of effecting a surprise.

"The French, I understand, contemplate a long bombardment, extending over several days at least; and it seems to me that our action as regards this question must be, to a certain extent, dependent upon theirs. Moreover, effective wire-cutting cannot be carried out in five or six hours; nor can we carry it out at the same time as the bombardment by heavy howitzers, or the destruction of the enemy's trenches and strong points, on account of the dust and smoke, which will prevent any possibility of accurate observation. The wire-cutting must, in any case, begin at least three days before the bombardment, for there is a very large amount of wire to be destroyed in addition to what is in the front line, far more than was the case at Loos. I presume that wire-cutting will be simultaneously carried out by other armies.

"As regards (2), bearing in mind the existence of numerous dug-outs and cellars in the enemy's lines, I do not think that the moral effect of a six hours' intense bombardment will be so great as that of one extended over several days. The effect on morale of a long, accurate, bombardment—which will pulverize strong points one by one, gradually knock in communication trenches, prevent reliefs being carried out, and systematically beat down the enemy's defences—will, to my mind, be very much greater, especially as with many new detachments we cannot expect very accurate shooting in a hurricane bombardment.

"A long bombardment gives the enemy no chance of sleep; food and ammunition are difficult to bring up; and the enemy is kept in a constant state of doubt as to when the infantry assault will take place. His troops in the front line must be relieved every forty-eight hours, or they will break down under the strain; and it will be our business to so regulate our fire as to inflict heavy

losses, even at night, on any relieving detachments he may endeavour to bring forward.

"19. In addition, as already explained in my letter of the 3rd of April, to get assaulting troops forward by daylight into their assembly position is, in this case, extremely difficult, if not impossible.

"The alternative is to bring them up by night, and keep them in their assembly places during the intense bombardment. This is not at all desirable; it would entail heavy losses both in men and in morale, and is particularly inadvisable with young troops.

"20. As regards the actual length of the bombardment preceding the assault, this must depend on the following factors:

"(*a*) Action of the French.

"(*b*) The amount of ammunition available when offensive operations begin.

"(*c*) The length of time the gun detachments can work at high pressure without danger of breaking down.

"As regards (*b*) and (*c*), we must bear in mind that the preliminary bombardment is only the first phase of two or three weeks' sustained operations.

"I propose to go into this matter more fully before deciding the actual length of the bombardment. This I can do when more information is available as to (1) Exactly when the operations will take place; (2) The number of guns and amount of ammunition that will be actually available; (3) The French bombardment and plan of attack."

Sir Douglas Haig made his decisions towards the end of April.

"*April 30.*—I am quite clear in my mind now, about the plan. The bombardment is to be deliberate, four or five days, according to ammunition supply. The attack is to go for the big thing. I still think we would do better to proceed by shorter steps; but I have told D.H. I will carry out his plan with as much enthusiasm as if it were my own."

While the work of preparation was at its height, there came news that shook Rawlinson deeply.

"*June 7.*—As I came in to breakfast from my ride this morning, Buckland, with a sad face, handed me in silence the wireless message which told that the *Hampshire* had been mined off the Orkneys, and that Lord K. and Fitzgerald had been drowned. Another of my beloved old Chiefs gone! It is a severe shock to me personally, and for a moment I felt numbed by the news. A great loss to the nation; but I was comforted by reflecting that it had happened when K. had completed his task of raising the new armies.[1] Even in his death, K. will have served his country, for it will make the nation more determined than ever to continue the war to the bitter end, and to exact full retribution."

"*June 13.*—This morning I attended the memorial service to Lord K., held in our little recreation room. It was packed with men of all ranks belonging to the Fourth Army Head-quarters, and was very moving. I recalled the many interesting hours that I had spent with him during the eighteen years that I have been privileged to know him intimately. First came the Sudan War, where he taught me more about active service than I could ever otherwise have learned. Then my trip with him to the Far East to attend the Japanese manœuvres, and the china-hunting and curio-collecting together in Pekin, which opened what was to me a new side of his character. There followed my visits to him in India and in Egypt, during which we had many long and intimate talks on the great problems of the Empire, and finally came his few weeks in London before his appointment as Secretary of State, and our frequent and long discussions during this war of wars. He has been a great friend and a great example to me, and I shall miss him after the war is over more than I care to think. I wish he could have lived to see his New Army divisions fighting in the coming battle, for I feel sure they would have made him proud of them. He was one of the great landmarks of my life, a source from which one could not help receiving many and valuable inspirations. He had a personality in which one could confide one's most secret

[1] The last of the New Army divisions left England on the eve of Lord Kitchener's departure.

thoughts without risk of having one's confidence abused. To talk of him as being unapproachable is rubbish. He was a much kinder man than he ever dared admit, even to himself, though he sometimes let his tongue run away with him in conversation. He always seemed to me to see just half as far again into the future as anyone else, and the qualities that I most admired in him were his determination and his imagination. His nerve was amazingly good, though he had his intervals of depression in times of strain. I remember before the battle of Atbara, whilst talking over the preparations alone with me, to my intense surprise he burst into tears and sobbed out, 'I hope everything will go right.' I heard from Fitz that he was in much the same state on the eve of the evacuation of Gallipoli. It was not the breakdown of his plans that affected him, but the thought of the losses which an enterprise, apparently so desperate, might entail."

On the evening of June 30, the eve of the attack by the infantry, and the sixth day of the preliminary bombardment of the German lines, Rawlinson sat down to review his three months' work of preparation. "Here are a few noteworthy facts about the Fourth Army on the eve of the great battle:

"(i) The strength of the army, including the three cavalry divisions and the general reserve of three infantry divisions, is just about 500,000 men, of whom 240,226 are infantry. All the units are up to strength, and the spirit of all ranks is splendid.

"(ii) We have just over 1,500 guns, of which 450 are of large calibre. We are short of 9·2 ammunition, and there is none for the 4·7's, but the field-guns have an unlimited supply, and the 60-pounders and 6-inch howitzers are well off. We are short of heavy trench-mortars, having only about 25, instead of the 200 promised.

"(iii) The corps and divisional commanders are the best we have got, and there are few weak spots amongst them. All know their job, and the great majority are proved fighters.

"(iv) Our trenches are in good order. The roads and approaches have been carefully prepared and improved, and all railways, light and other, are complete.

"(v) We have many mines ready, and several shallow galleries have been dug to make communication across no man's land easy.

"(vi) The ammunition that we have moved up for the bombardment in the first day's battle weighs 40,000 tons.

"(vii) The weather has not been kind, but to-day the forecast is favourable.

"(viii) The artillery work during the bombardment, and the wire-cutting, has been well done except in the VIIIth Corps, which is somewhat behindhand. During the bombardment now in progress, we are firing 150,000 rounds a day and 50,000 a night.

"(ix) Our aircraft seems well in the way of obtaining the mastery. They have downed all the German sausage balloons, and the number of enemy aeroplanes over our lines gets daily fewer.

"(x) Some of the German prisoners whom we have taken say they have not had any food for forty-eight hours, as no parties could get through our barrage to bring it up to the trenches.

"The Russians are on the move, and a very little would bring in Rumania now.[1] Cavendish, who was here to-day from French G.H.Q., says they are very keen about Foch's attack on our right, and that Joffre will support it with all his reserves if we are successful. The situation at Verdun is critical, and we cannot wait any longer if it is to be saved. So the issues at stake in to-morrow's battle are as great, if not greater, than in any which has yet been fought during the war. What the actual results will be no one can foretell, but I feel pretty confident of success myself, though we shall only get it after heavy fighting. That the Boche will break, and that a *débâcle* will supervene, I do not believe; but if that should take place I am quite ready to take full advantage of it. We have done all that we can, and the rest is in the hands of the good God."

Of the first attack, Rawlinson wrote to Major Clive Wigram on July 3: "The battle is, on the whole, going

[1] Brussilov's offensive had been some time in progress, and on June 17 the Russians had recaptured Czernowitz.

well for us, but, though we have been at it now for three days, we are still only at the beginning. In the first rush all five corps succeeded in breaking through the enemy's first system of trenches, but the two northern corps, the VIIIth and Xth, failed to maintain their positions. The three southern corps, the IIIrd, XVth and the XIIIth, captured Boiselle, Fricourt, Mametz, and Montauban; the last being an extremely fine performance by the 30th Lancashire Division. Now I am continuing the battle with the three southern corps, having handed over the two northern corps to Gough, as I find it impossible to control the operations of five corps on a front of over twenty miles in a battle which may last many weeks. The casualties have, of course, been heavy, but when we consider that 29 brigades—over 100,000 infantry—were taking part in the first assault, I do not think that the percentage of losses is excessive.[1] The French on our right have done very well, particularly south of the Somme, where there were

[1] There is considerable difficulty in arriving at the correct British losses for any particular battle, as the official casualty lists contained in "Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire," show the losses on the whole British front during the periods of battles, and give very exceptionally the losses of troops actually engaged in battle.

The total strength of the Fourth Army on July 1 was 511,676, and of these over 100,000 infantry took part in the first assault. The returns of the Director of Medical Services of the Fourth Army show that the admissions of wounded to field ambulances up to midnight, July 1, were: officers, 526, other ranks, 14,146, total 14,672. It was on this return that Rawlinson based his statement that the losses in the first assault had not been excessve. Up to 9 p.m., July 4, the returns show losses: officers 1,409, other ranks 39,394, and to these must be added the killed, missing and prisoners, and the wounded who had not reached the field ambulances. The return of losses in the Fourth Army from July 1–6 inclusive, as finally checked at Fourth Army headquarters, shows total casualties 2,429 officers, 61,230 other ranks. These figures include the losses of the VIIIth and Xth corps, which became subsequently the Reserve Army, and later the Fifth Army under Sir Hubert Gough. The closest estimate of the losses of the Fourth Army up to midnight, July 1, which I have been able to make is 35,600 out of a total strength of 511,600, or 6%. The losses of the assailant in one-day battles of more recent wars were Fredericksburg 10%; Wörth 11%; Gravelotte 10%; Plevna, 2nd battle, 22%. The essential difference between the Somme and the other battles cited is, of course, that the attack of July 1 was but the prelude to a long continuous struggle, while the number of men not exposed to the dangers of battle, in a stationary army in trench warfare, was much larger than in a moving army. Whereas in other wars the result of a day's battle had normally been to produce a definite result, on the Somme the first day's fighting had, at best, only opened a crack in the doors leading to a decision. It is characteristic of Rawlinson, that though his plan had not been adopted, and the attempt to carry the enemy's second line in the first assault had failed, there is nothing in his papers or correspondence of "I told you so." He looked at what had been, not at what might have been achieved, proceeded to hearten everyone and to carry out his chief's plans with the utmost loyalty.

no German reserves available, and where, in consequence, they succeeded in capturing the German first and second system with comparatively little difficulty. They managed their artillery well, had practically unlimited ammunition, and carried out their assault with great dash and determination.

"I cannot speak too highly of the spirit and self-sacrifice of our rank and file. The courage of the New Armies is magnificent, and, if they had been able to devote more time to training, they would have been able to hold on to many points of importance which they captured, but from which they were driven by the enterprising German machine-gunners. We have shown the Boches that we can break their lines on a wide front, and, above all, we have already helped the French immensely at Verdun."

The result of the fighting of the first week of the battle of the Somme was to bring the firing line of the Fourth Army within assaulting distance of the enemy's second system of defence. Rawlinson's plan for the attack upon this second system was bold and original:

"The scheme for the attack of the second line had been drawn up by me in detail for some days previously. I had worked it out carefully in every detail, with corps and divisional commanders, and though the Commander-in-Chief was at first reluctant to grant permission to carry it out, on account of the risk entailed by a night attack, he finally acquiesced, and authorized me to put it into execution, and the attack was duly made on July 14, at 3.25 a.m.

"The divisions which undertook this attack were the 21st, 7th, 3rd and 9th, the two former belonging to the XVth Corps, and the two latter to the XIIIth Corps. Each division had two brigades in the front line, and one in reserve, and the right flank was protected by the 18th Division, which attacked Trones Wood at 6 p.m. on the evening before, and had by daylight firmly established themselves on the eastern edge of it.

"The enemy's wire entanglements and lines of defence were visible from the Montauban Ridge, and from the northern edge of Mametz Wood. From these points of vantage our forward observing officers were able to direct

the fire of the artillery, especially of the 18-pounders, against the wire entanglements, and during the 12th and 13th they succeeded with their 18-pounder shrapnel in sweeping away these wire obstacles. Observation on the trenches themselves was also good, so that the fire of a very large number of heavy howitzers could be accurately directed upon the double lines of trench.

"The second German line of trench had been deliberately laid out by the enemy many months previously. We knew that it was scientifically constructed, and that an assault against it would not have reasonable chances of success unless much material destruction had been effected by the heavy guns. The heavy artillery of three corps could bear on this front of about 5,000 yards, which, irrespective of field-guns, gave us a heavy howitzer to every 19 yards of front, and a field-gun to every 6 yards of front.

"With such a concentration of fire, and with 48 hours to register and prepare it, it was expected that the material destruction would be great.

"Apart from the actual assault of the enemy's front line trench, the task of the infantry was no easy one. The two divisions of the XIIIth Corps had an open slope of about 1,500 yards to traverse before reaching the enemy's line. On this open slope there was no cover whatever, and, as far as we could judge, it was probably swept by the enemy's infantry fire, and could certainly be well covered by his artillery barrage. The task of the XVth Corps was easier, for that the northern edge of Mametz Wood and Flat-Iron Copse gave some cover under which the assaulting lines could form.

"In considering the plan of attack, it was obvious that to send the infantry of the XIIIth Corps across this 1,500 yards of open, in broad daylight, would be a very hazardous operation, and we were all strongly of opinion that the only reasonably safe method for undertaking this advance was under cover of darkness. There were great risks in moving so large a body of troops across the open in the dark, but the very careful preparations made by the 9th and 3rd Divisions in marking out the ground with posts and tapes, and by the construction of a series of strong

points along the spurs which ran southwards from the enemy's position, enabled them to carry out this difficult enterprise without a hitch."

Never before in war had an attack at dawn been attempted by so large a force as four divisions in the midst of a great battle, and the ordering of it was a heavy responsibility, more especially as Sir Douglas Haig had expressed grave doubts before he had agreed to the enterprise. With the devoted and skilful assistance of Montgomery, Rawlinson had thought out and supervised every detail of preparation. Having done all that was humanly possible, he wrote on the night of the 13th: "D.H. was here to see me this afternoon. He is in the best of health and spirits, and no one recognizes more thoroughly than he does the immense issues which hang on to-morrow. If we are as successful as I hope and believe we shall be, the results cannot be exaggerated. If we fail, it will mean another winter campaign for certain, and probably that the war will drag on through 1917. Everyone will, I know, strain every nerve to win a decisive victory, which I pray God to grant us." With that prayer he went to bed, to sleep soundly and rise at 3 a.m. The modern commander cannot sit on a horse and survey his forces marshalled for battle. Most of his work is done ere his troops move forward to attack, and the most trying moments of his life are those spent in waiting at the end of a telephone for the results of his plans and preparations. Rawlinson's diary of July 14 gives us a vivid picture of the alternations of hope and disappointment as news came in:

"4.30 a.m. Anxiously waiting for news of the attack, which was delivered at 3.25 under an exceedingly heavy bombardment which was audible here like distant thunder. Fine, still morning, somewhat overcast. The night has been fine and still, with heavy dew. Rumour just arrived from XIIIth Corps that its left battalion has got into hostile front line. The attack, in my opinion, started a little too early. Three deserters from the German 3rd Guards Division came in last night, and say they were not expecting to be attacked. I hope this is so, and that we may surprise them in the grey dawn. We thought their 3rd

Guards Division was opposite Ovillers. They may have been moved south to this more dangerous front.

"7.45. I spoke to corps commanders on the telephone. All is going exceedingly well at present. We are in possession of all our first objectives, i.e., Bazentin le Grand and Bazentin le Petit, both the woods at those places, Longueval, the whole of the village, and Delville Wood. Things have gone so quickly and so well that I have authorized Congreve to send through the 2nd Cavalry Division. He sent the order to them at 7.40 with High Wood as their objective. If they get possession of this we shall be on the high road to a big success. The only thing that is annoying me is the weather, which is overcast, with low, leaden-looking clouds, so that the aeroplanes cannot work. We have already lost one at Maricourt, I hear. Rain is threatening, and there is a small depression working east along the southern edge of the North Sea. It is this that is bringing rain.

"1.30 p.m. Things have not progressed as fast as I should have liked. The cavalry found the ground so slippery from the wet that they could not get along, so did not go through the line. Though we are in full possession of Bazentin le Grand and Petit, there are a few machine-gunners hanging out in the orchard north of Bazentin le Grand. There are also some Boches still holding out in the German front line trench, near to the windmill. The northern part of Longueval is not yet in our possession, and we have only a few men in Delville Wood, but the whole of Trones Wood is in our hands, and we are hard at work consolidating the eastern side of the wood. Horne (XVth Corps) is making an attack at 2.30 p.m., against the second line trenches which lead up to behind Pozières, in conjunction with the IIIrd Corps at Contalmaison Villa. We have captured a good many prisoners of all sorts of units. They report the confusion behind the German lines to be very great. We have captured two colonels of regiments with their staffs. If only the air were clearer, and the airmen could get through to see what is going on, it would be an immense assistance, but I doubt its clearing this afternoon. A report is just in that the

hostile guns in front of the IIIrd Corps have stopped firing. I fear they are off. Oh, if we could get the cavalry through to charge them!

"10.30 p.m. The afternoon was spent mainly in consolidating our positions. The XVth Corps made an attack on High Wood with two battalions, 7th Division, and a regiment of cavalry. The latest reports from F.O.O.s[1] say we have taken the wood, and our mounted men have been seen chasing Boches with spears. I hope this is true. Two feeble counter-attacks were made, one against Longueval, the other against Bazentin le Petit; both were repulsed with heavy loss. D.H. and Foch both came over to congratulate me personally on our success, and we settled the plan for the great battle of Bapaume. The French attack Maurepas on the 18th.

"The anxieties of these days would be unendurable if the British soldier did not provide us with some comic relief. One of our greatest difficulties in the attack in trench warfare, has been to get reliable information as to the progress of the first wave. Reports from aircraft, and forward observing officers, nearly always turn out to be too optimistic. So we provided the attacking infantry with carrier pigeons, to bring back correct information from the firing line. Soon after the attack was launched, a carrier pigeon was seen coming back to the loft at a corps head-quarters. Great was the excitement amongst the staff as the message was carefully unwound, and this is what they read: 'I am fed up with carrying this bloody bird!'" The entry closes with a sigh of regret: "I believe that if I could have persuaded D.H. to let me make the attack forty-eight hours earlier, we might have got the Germans on the run, but it was a big risk for him to take until he was sure our plans were all right."

If the results of the attack begun on July 14, which brought the first phase of the battle of the Somme to a conclusion, had more than justified Rawlinson's plan, they did not bring the decisive success which he had thought was within the bounds of possibility, if not of probability. There followed, during the remainder of July and the whole

[1] Artillery Forward Observing Officers.

of August, a ding-dong struggle, constituting the second phase of the fight, with the object of straightening out and widening the front of battle in preparation for another effort on a great scale. As early as the middle of August, Rawlinson had made up his mind that the Somme would not bring a decision, and that we should work for victory in 1917. On August 16 he wrote:

"The most noticeable feature so far, in the battle of the Somme, has been the fine fighting spirit and extreme gallantry which has been exhibited by the New Armies. With very few exceptions, all divisions of the New Army have done exceedingly well, particularly when they have been given specific objectives, and have had time to work out every detail of the attack beforehand. It is in the manœuvre battle that they are liable to fail, owing, of course, to the lack of experience and training both of officers and men. I am sure, however, that this can be rectified during the coming winter.

"With the increase in heavy artillery which is daily coming into the country, with the additions which are being made weekly to our air services, and with practically unlimited amounts of ammunition which will be available by the end of this year, I feel sure that we shall be able to carry out early next year a successful offensive, not only on the front of one army, but on the front of two, and possibly three.

"Moreover, the fighting strength, as well as all the various engines of war, will show a marked increase in our own and in the Russian armies. The French cannot, I fear, do more than maintain their present establishment. Whereas, therefore, the Allied armies as a whole will become increasingly more powerful, those of the Central Powers have already passed their zenith. The time when Austria will collapse cannot be far distant, and with that collapse the situation in the Near East, assisted by the entry of Rumania into the war on the side of the Allies, must inevitably bring about the fall of Turkey, whatever attitude Bulgaria may finally decide to adopt.

"It is not too much to hope, therefore, that by the beginning of 1917, we may find ourselves confronted, not by

a combination of the Central Powers, assisted by the Turks, Bulgarians and Hungarians, but by one single and paramount enemy, Germany. She will not be the Germany which began the war in 1914, but a tired and emaciated empire, shut out from communication with the outer world, thrown on the defensive on all fronts, with every man's hand against her, and on her western and eastern fronts confronted by enemies becoming more and more powerful every day.

"I am persuaded that she will fight it out to the bitter end, and that we shall never exact the terms repeatedly reiterated by the Prime Minister, except as the result of a crushing defeat in the field on all fronts. These victories will be within the grasp of the Allies in 1917, but not before, and our best energies must be devoted, during the coming winter, to preparing for them."

But by the end of August a material change for the better had taken place. The German resistance on the Somme front showed definite signs of weakening.[1] Von Falkenhayn had been replaced by Hindenburg and Ludendorff, an indication that all was not well at German Head-quarters. Our aircraft had established a marked superiority in the air, and a new instrument of war, specially designed to overcome the difficulties of trench warfare, was available in the Tank. The Italians had captured Gorizia, and were pressing the Austrians on the Isonzo; on the Eastern European frontier the Russians had won remarkable successes in Galicia, and Rumania had, at last, decided to join the Allies. We had moved out from the Suez Canal, and were driving the Turks back towards the frontier of Palestine. In Mesopotamia, Maude had the situation well in hand; and, if at Salonika there was a deadlock, that town with its important harbour was in no danger. Not since the battle of the Marne had the prospects seemed so hopeful. On all these grounds Sir Douglas Haig decided to make another big effort on the Somme, where the progress already achieved admitted

[1] "The loss of ground up to date appeared to me of little importance in itself. We could stand that, but the question how this, and the progressive falling off of our fighting power, of which it was symptomatic, was likely to be prevented, was of immense importance. The first was an easy matter, the second of extreme difficulty," Ludendorff, "My War Memories," Vol. I. p. 266.

of Gough's army, on Rawlinson's left, taking a larger part in the battle, and permitted the French VIth Army, on his right, again to attack on a wide front.

"*August 30.*—The Chief is anxious to have a gamble with all the available troops about September 15, with the object of breaking down German resistance and getting through to Bapaume. The general plan will be the same as before. We are to establish a flank from Morval to Bapaume, facing east, and attack with all the troops available. We shall have no reserves in hand, save tired troops, but success at this time would have a great effect throughout the world, and might bring the Boche to terms. If we fail, we shall have all the winter in which to recuperate, and there will be no counter-attack left in the enemy. It is worth the risk."

Of the battle of September 15, memorable among other reasons for the baptism of fire of the tanks, and of the fighting which followed, Rawlinson wrote to Lord Derby on September 29:

"It was very good of you to send me a wire of congratulation, which I much appreciated. The battles of the 15th and 25th were certainly very successful, more so than I had dared to hope, but the weather was kind to us. The result has been that not only have we gained the whole of the high ground which commands the plain right up to Bapaume, but have also secured an area of between 3,000 and 4,000 yards deep on the other side of the ridge. Moreover, our capture of the villages of Morval and Les Bœufs has secured us possession of Combles, and has been of great assistance to the French in getting forward on the south side of the Combles Valley. Their attacks were not so successful as ours, partly because the Boches fought harder, and partly because something went wrong with their barrage. I cannot find out exactly what it was.

"Nothing could have surpassed the vigour and dash displayed by the New Zealanders, the 41st and 14th Divisions, all of Horne's XVth Corps, which formed my centre on the 15th. Their assault and capture of Flers village, surrounded as it was by numberless trenches, and defended with great tenacity; the establishment of a trench

beyond the eastern lines of that village; and their attempts to go on to Grandecourt, constituted one of the finest feats performed during this war.

"On my left, Pulteney's IIIrd Corps, with the 15th, 50th and 47th Divisions, had been allotted a more limited objective. Its capture, however, entailed getting possession both of High Wood and the village of Martinpuich. The 15th Division had been in the line nearly four weeks, and their gallantry in charging through the village, after so long a time in the trenches, was a very fine performance. They were much helped by the successful attacks of the 2nd Canadian Division of Gough's army on my left. The 50th and 47th Divisions had very heavy fighting in High Wood, and it was not until late in the afternoon that they succeeded in moving round both flanks and pushing on towards their objectives beyond.

"On my right was Cavan's XIVth Corps, in which the 56th Division was only required to establish a defensive flank towards Combles, but the attack of the 6th Division, next them, against the Quadrilateral was hung up, and they did not succeed in capturing it till the 18th. This made the task of the Guards Division very difficult, and I fear their losses are heavy, but they did their jobs as the Guards always do. On their left the enemy hung on tenaciously to a nest of trenches, and inflicted heavy loss on the Coldstreams, until John Campbell, in the most gallant manner, charged, and turned them out.[1]

"The tanks in certain instances, such as at Flers and Martinpuich, rendered very valuable service, but they failed to have that effect on the fighting which many of their strongest advocates expected. They laboured under great difficulties. The officers and men who were driving them had not been under fire before; they had had great difficulty in maintaining their direction, owing to their limited vision; and their very low speed over ground torn by shells was a very serious handicap. 50% of them failed to reach their place of assembly, and only about 25% got round the enemy's first line trenches.[2] Until they have more engine power,

[1] For his leading on this day, Col. John Campbell received the V.C.

[2] The actual figures were: out of forty-nine tanks, thirty-two reached the place of assembly; of these, nine broke down, five were ditched, and eighteen took a successful part in the battle.

can maintain a speed of four miles an hour over really bad ground, and until the personnel has had more experience, they will not be of much value to an infantry assault.

"On September 25 and 26 we set out to take the objectives we had failed to reach on the 15th, viz., the villages of Grandecourt, Les Bœufs and Morval. We had begun on September 24 with a long and deliberate bombardment by heavy artillery, and this, and the field artillery barrage, enabled the infantry to capture the enemy's front line trenches, except at one point.

"Having overcome the opposition in the trenches, they do not seem to have had great difficulty with the villages. The Guards speedily took Les Bœufs, though Morval and Grandecourt took longer, and it was not until the evening of the 26th that we were in complete possession of both.

"The outstanding fact which of all others is the most satisfactory, and which has been most marked during the battle of the Somme, is the valour and tenacity of the infantry. They have fought with a bravery and determination which one had never dared to hope for. It is in the New Armies, and amongst the Dominion troops, that the fighting spirit has been most marked, and the successes gained by these troops, led by half-trained officers, and in many cases only partially trained themselves, are most remarkable.

"When, during the coming winter, special attention has been given to further training, I have great hopes that they will, in 1917, establish a much greater moral and physical superiority over the enemy than they have been able to do up to the present.

"Our artillery, likewise—and I include in the artillery both heavy and field artillery, as well as batteries of the New Armies—have attained a very high degree of efficiency.

"It has been suggested that in artillery tactics we have much to learn from the French, and that we have not sufficiently benefited by their experience. I do not agree. The French and British armies now fighting in France are one. The intimate relationship which exists between us is of the most cordial and confidential nature. There are no secrets, and each is out to help the other to the utmost of its powers,

and in tactics and organization I do not think we have much to learn from French methods.

"In this connection it is interesting to note that the principle we have always adopted in the Fourth Army of the establishment of a time-table for an attack, and the imposition of stationary and creeping barrages to cover the infantry advance, has been adopted by the French Sixth Army, and was employed by them in the battle of October 7.

"During the battle of the Somme we have learnt many lessons, and are continuing daily to benefit by experience, but it is rather in the realms of material, the reserve of guns and spare parts necessary to maintain our batteries in action over a long period, than in the realm of tactics, that the most important lessons have to be learnt.

"I have no hesitation in saying that at the beginning of 1917 the general fighting efficiency of all branches of the army in France will have attained a degree of perfection, which should procure for us in the field successes far greater than those which have fallen to our lot during the battle of the Somme."

The reference in this account to French and British artillery tactics was provoked by an incident which caused Rawlinson considerable uneasiness. Mr. Lloyd George paid his second visit as Secretary of State for War to the British Army in France, during the September battles. After they were over, Rawlinson wrote:

"I do trust there is not going to be friction between the S. of S. and the Chief. It is hard enough to win the war without that sort of thing. L.G. visited Foch the other day, and invited criticism of Haig and of our methods. Foch very loyally refused to do anything of the kind, and let Haig know what had passed. Methods of that kind are bound to make trouble. Now I hear he has been criticizing our heavy artillery, which is very hard on men who have been working like heroes. What is the reason for it? Is it the casualties? Is it our tactics, or just dislike of Haig?"

The criticism of the artillery had been sent to Rawlinson by General Birch, who had been taken from the Fourth Army in May, and brought to General Head-quarters by Haig.

General Budworth had succeeded Birch as Rawlinson's chief of the artillery, and he remained in that position till the end of the war. Rawlinson had complete confidence in Budworth, and had been at special pains to supervise the training of his artillery, and to ensure its effective co-operation with the other arms. In his army, during the battle of the Somme, the most important artillery discovery of the war, "the creeping barrage," had been developed. On September 28, he wrote: "All prisoners captured speak of the effectiveness of our artillery, both by day and night; they likewise bear witness to the dash of our infantry, and to the way in which they advanced close on the heels of the creeping barrage, which does not permit the Boches to man their parapets in time to open fire. This is very good hearing, for I have been preaching this in and out of season for a long time." He was therefore considerably surprised to get this from Birch the next day:

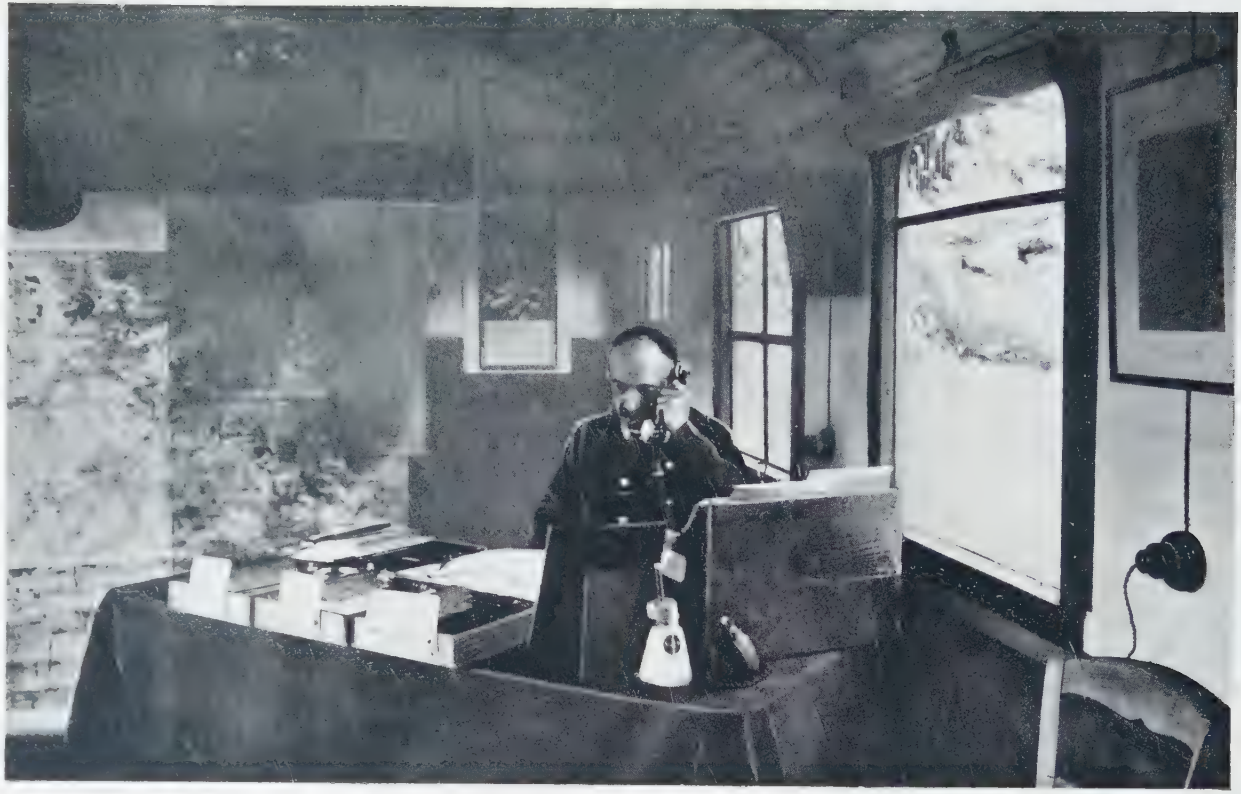
"Mr. Lloyd George, on his return to England after his recent visit to France, has made the following statement to responsible officials at home: 'The garrison artillery in France is entirely untrained, it cannot shoot, and is quite unfitted to work the perfect weapons which I have provided.' The Commander-in-Chief has asked me to write to you to ascertain your personal opinion on the performance of the Garrison Artillery in the recent battles, and it would be very kind if you would give it."

To this Rawlinson answered:

"I am perfectly satisfied with the accuracy and effect both of the counter-battery groups and the heavy howitzers during the battle of the Somme. I know that their fire has been accurate by reason of:

(i.) The examination of aerial photographs.
(ii.) The examination of their targets when captured.
(iii.) The reports of the staff and regimental officers.
(iv.) The reports of the Royal Flying Corps.
(v.) The confidence the infantry have in their fire power.
(vi.) The evidence of innumerable prisoners.

"The battle of the Somme has been a great and trying artillery struggle. Without the effective assistance of the



THE COMMANDER OF THE FOURTH ARMY AT WORK AT HIS HEAD-QUARTERS
Australian Official Photograph.

heavy howitzer and counter-battery groups the successes which have attended the efforts of the Fourth Army could never have been attained."

A note in the diary followed the dispatch of this letter: "I am sure L.G. wants to win the war, and his splendid keenness and vitality can be a great asset to us. But he will only get himself into difficulties if he starts laying down the law on matters he knows nothing about. He has heard some silly gossip, and is using it to have a dig at Haig. First we had French quarrelling with K., and now there are the makings of another quarrel. Haig will take it philosophically, but that won't prevent the mischief these petty disputes do."

With the capture of Morval, the Fourth Army had secured in three months of gigantic effort the whole of the Somme plateau on its front. Sir Douglas Haig thereupon decided to shift the axis of battle northwards, and to confide the chief rôle to Gough's army on Rawlinson's left. There followed some important changes in the Fourth Army:

"*September 29.*—Horne left to take over command of the First Army, and I bade him farewell after lunch.[1] I am glad for his sake, but am desperately sorry to lose him on my own account. He has been a tower of strength, and full of originality. However, I am lucky in getting du Cane as his successor. D.H. came at about 4 p.m., and stayed nearly an hour discussing plans. He is a bold fighter, and I greatly admire his scheme for October 12. I am sure he is right to widen the battle front, and I pray that Gough's army may succeed."

The Fourth Army was still to have fighting in plenty before the struggle ended, but it was no longer to be the spear-head of battle. It fought on October 12, 18 and 23, and again on November 2, but each time the main object was to help either Gough on the left, or the French on the right. In October the weather broke, and it interfered greatly with the attack of October 12, particularly as Gough's army was working its way into the valley of the Ancre. Rawlinson, on the higher ground, found the condi-

[1] Sir Charles Monro had been appointed Commander-in-Chief in India.

tions more than sufficiently trying, and he began to think it time to call a halt.

"*October 14.*—From what I see of the general situation on the front of this army, I do not think that we shall reach Bapaume this autumn. Before very long the weather and the cold will put a stop to our offensive. The last few days have been dry, but the glass is falling and we are pretty sure to have some more wet soon. The nights are getting very cold, and I pity the men in the trenches. A battalion cannot now stand more than forty-eight hours in the line, which shows that the infantry is getting weary. If we have more rain the roads will become impassable, and we shall not get the ammunition to the guns. After all, the battle of the Somme has now lasted nearly four months, and has cost the Fourth Army 240,000 casualties, so it is nearly time that it came to an end.[1] The bad weather which has forced us to slow down has given the Boche a breather. His artillery is better organized, and his infantry is fighting with greater tenacity, but deserters continue to come in; and, the more we bombard, the more prisoners and deserters we shall get. I should like, therefore, to be more or less aggressive all the winter, but we must not take the edge off for next year."

More and more Rawlinson's eyes were turned towards 1917. On November 1, he wrote to Sir William Robertson: "The weather has been very unkind to us this last week, and the state of the roads in the forward area, coupled with the immensely long carry of 4,000 yards down to the front trenches, are causing me considerable anxiety, for they are using up the vital energies of the troops much faster than I like. We must and will continue the offensive. It is of the first importance, both strategically and politically, but we cannot carry it on on the same scale in the winter as in the summer. Moreover, we must not take so much out of the divisions that they will not be on the top of their form next spring. Of course, we should like a few more divisions, and I know you will send them to us if they are

[1] Rawlinson was unaware, when he wrote this, that Joffre was pressing Haig to continue the battle, while he was preparing to attack the Germans at Verdun. The first French attack at Verdun took place on November 1, and resulted in the recapture of Fort Vaux; the second took place on December 15.

procurable, but where are they to come from? We must have more if we are to obtain a vigorous offensive all next summer. In this problem it is not only a question of man power, there is also the education and training of the officers to be considered. We cannot expect to win battles on a large scale unless we have trained leaders, who have the knowledge as well as the courage to do the right thing at the right moment. The new material is excellent, but raw, and quite devoid of tactical skill and instinct. We must have time to train the platoon and company commanders if we are to achieve a great success. This can, I think, be done within the armies out here, so long as the temperature on the front is not maintained at too high a level. A great deal of offensive work can and must be done, but on a moderate scale. We cannot go on attacking on fronts of ten, twelve or fifteen divisions in the winter, but we can do a lot of good attacks with smaller units, which will be less expensive and will prevent the Boche from recovering from the blows we have given him, keep him from going off to Russia, and will satisfy our French friends without our having to take over more line. They never seem to understand that we are making armies while we are fighting. If we have to take over more line, it will seriously cripple our offensive in the spring.

"Conditions in the trenches are nearly as bad as they were in 1914. The trenches are knee-deep in mud, there are no revetments, the bottom is out of the roads, and the railways are progressing but slowly. All this means excessive fatigue to the men."

If the men were weary, so was the commander. At the end of October, he wrote: "I can't say that I feel overdone. I live carefully, and am physically as fit as ever, but I know that thirty-six hours of rest, which I shall spend mostly in sleep, will do me a world of good and set me on my legs for another month or two. It is the constant interviews and decisions that take it out of one, and most of all the people who will multiply their little worries till they look as if the fate of the Empire depended on them. Thank God, I have a sense of humour and can see the funny side of most of them."

By the third week in November, Rawlinson was able to get away to England for a few days' leave, and just before leaving he got an insight into the plans for 1917. Haig had met Joffre in conference at Chantilly, and together they had prepared a programme which the British Commander-in-Chief communicated on his return to the leaders of his armies.

"*November 18.*—I attended the Army Commanders' Conference near St. Pol, at the head-quarters of the Third Army. D.H. gave us his general plan for the winter, and preparations for the spring campaign. There is no doubt the Germans are hard put to it, in spite of their success in Rumania. French, Russian, and War Office calculations agree in putting the German casualties on the Somme at 630,000. The French and British casualties together amount to 485,000. The Germans employed 110 divisions on the Somme,[1] and the average loss per division was 50 % of the infantry strength.[2] Haig, therefore, is going to keep up as much pressure on the Somme during the winter as is compatible with preparations for the spring. We must not let the Germans recover. We are all to be ready to resume the battle on February 1. The French can put up one more big battle, and thereafter we shall have to take the chief part. This is all very sound, but I doubt if the Fourth Army can be ready on February 1. However, we will try. Haig told me that he had recommended me for promotion to general, and Archie to major-general. It is very good of him, but I am rather doubtful if they will allow it, as both of us are young for these ranks, and we shall jump over the heads of a lot of people."

However, he was not kept long in doubt. Soon after returning from leave he was again at G.H.Q. "D.H. tells me he has refused to accept promotion to Field-Marshal unless the other promotions he has recommended are made. He is a splendid man to serve." Rawlinson's name had been pointedly omitted from the Neuve Chapelle and Loos dispatches, and he was not surprised to find that a number

[1] According to "Die Schlachten und Gefechte des Grossen Krieges" the Germans engaged 98 divisions and 4 brigades.

[2] See note at end of chapter.

of his friends had been promoted lieutenant-generals over his head. He had taken that philosophically, and on November 1, 1915, had written in his diary: "I met Archie Murray at the War Office. He was profuse in apologies for having jumped over my head. I told him not to worry about that, and said that the only thing that had vexed me was that my men had not had all the recognition they deserved. This war is by far too big a thing to fuss about promotions. D.H. has taken up the cudgels on my behalf, and has written me a charming letter. He knows what I did, and as long as he is satisfied it does not matter what other people think."

If this was his sincere opinion, as a score of entries in his diaries show, he would have been more than human had he not been delighted when the former slight was put right; and his pleasure was made the greater by the very generous praise which Sir Douglas gave in his dispatch to the Fourth Army and its commander. As the year was drawing to its close, he wrote to his Chief:

December 21.

"My Dear Douglas,

"I have read the dispatches with the greatest interest, and gratification. You have given me more credit than I deserve, and taken too little to yourself. When I remember how often you have helped me with all the guns and ammunition, and with the pick of the staff officers, and with the best of the troops, and, in fact, with everything I have asked for, I feel that I owe you more than I can ever hope to repay. And now Eddie Derby wires to say that my promotion to full general is in the New Year's *Gazette*. Nothing that I can write can adequately express my thanks, but I do hope that during the coming year I may be able, by inflicting further defeats on the enemy, to justify the confidence you have placed in me.

"The old year has but a few more hours to run, and it has been full of great events and unprecedented success for our army, but I am confident it will be eclipsed beyond comparison by the victories of 1917. May I wish you every possible good fortune in the great campaign before

us, and hope that I may serve you with no less success in the future than in the past.

"Yours ever,

"RAWLY."

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE RESULTS OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

Sir Douglas Haig in his Somme dispatch said, "there is sufficient evidence to place it beyond doubt that the enemy's losses in men and material have been very considerably higher than those of the Allies, while morally the balance of advantage on our side is still greater."

This statement was made on the evidence which Rawlinson here quotes, evidence based on an examination by experts of the German casualty lists published up to October 14, 1917, which showed that in 523 battalions there were,

85,521	killed, died and missing	=	16%	of total strength
13,921	prisoners . . .	=	3%	" " "
142,022	wounded . . .	=	27%	" " "
A total of 241,464	. .	=	46%	" " "

The German losses for the whole battle were, therefore, calculated at 50% of the total infantry engaged, and a lower proportion was taken for the other arms. Up to October 31, 878 German battalions had been identified in the battle, many of which were engaged twice and some three times. On this basis the total loss of the Germans, opposed to both British and French, up to the end of October, was calculated to be 590,000, and for the whole battle of the Somme 630,000. The estimate proved to be exaggerated as to total, because sufficient allowance was not made for losses incurred by German divisions, which were engaged on the Somme, during the periods when they were on other parts of the front; because the number of German divisions engaged was slightly over-estimated; and because the strength of the German formations was taken to be higher than it sometimes was.

Even to-day, the German casualties in the battle of the Somme can only be estimated, because the German Record Office has not got complete returns of those wounded not treated in hospitals (the lightly wounded), but from investigations made recently in Germany I estimate the German losses in the battle of the Somme to be 558,000, a figure which agrees very nearly with an estimate made independently by Sir Charles Oman and published in the "The World Crisis: A Criticism," p. 40 *et seq.*

The losses of the French Sixth Army, which fought throughout the battle on the British right, are given in a return dated December 11, 1916, as:

July 1 to November 30, inclusive.

Killed and died of wounds, all ranks .	39,051
Wounded . . . . „ „ .	100,190
Missing . . . . „ „ .	20,675
Total . . . . „ „ .	159,916

The losses of the Fourth Army —including those up to July 6 of the VIIIth and Xth Corps, which eventually became the Fifth Army— as finally checked at Army Head-quarters were, according to the returns of that army, 277,134, from July 1 to November 18.

The total of Allied casualties from July 1 to November 18, the period of the battle of the Somme, as known at Allied head-quarters, was:—

British	343,112
French	143,072
Total	486,184

This is the figure Rawlinson gives in round numbers.

The total of British losses on the whole front from Ypres to the Somme, from July 1 to November 30, was, according to "Military Statistics of the British Empire," 497,476. If the battle losses of the Somme, from July 1 to November 18, were 343,112, this would mean that the losses on the remainder of the British front during that period were approximately 125,000. In the month of June preceding the battle, the British casualties averaged 500 per month per mile of front held, and losses of 125,000 would mean an average of 400 per mile per month in the British armies not actually engaged in the Somme battle, an indication that this very large figure is probably not in excess of the truth.

If the complete losses in any battle can now only be arrived at by approximation, and comparisons of the casualty returns of different countries are misleading because each country had a different method of accounting for its wounded, the returns of killed and missing are now practically complete, and admit of no difference of system of accountancy.

The latest return of the German killed and missing of the *Reichsarchiv* show the losses in those categories in the battle of the Somme to have been 164,055. The killed and missing in the French Sixth Army for the battle numbered 50,726, and the corresponding British losses were 95,675. The evidence both at the time and to-day, therefore, is to the effect that the losses of the Germans in the battle of the

Somme were greater than those of the Allies. But in making up the balance-sheet of the battle of the Somme, the effect of the two French victories at Verdun of November 1 and December 15, which were the direct consequence of the Somme and recovered for the French all that the Germans had won in four and a half months of desperate fighting, must also be taken into account.

The expression "killing Germans" has been sometimes derisively quoted as representing the one aim of British military policy. It was used by Rawlinson and by other British commanders to sum up a principle of battle contained in the Field Service Regulations of 1914, and reproduced in those of 1920:—"The object of the attacker in battle will usually be to engage the enemy along his whole front in sufficient strength to pin him to his ground, to force him to use up his reserves, to wear down his power of resistance, and to produce in him a feeling of moral inferiority; while he himself prepares and develops his main attack." It is in the spirit of these words that Sir Douglas Haig has called the Somme in his dispatch "the wearing-out battle."

Evidence from the German side is abundant that the enemy was, in fact, worn out by the Somme battle. Unfortunately, this was not apparent to the statesmen or the public of Great Britain and France, while the long tale of their own losses was only too conspicuous. The Germans had endured so stoutly that they prolonged the wearing-out battle into the winter, when it was impossible to strike another blow immediately. Therefore the military policy of the Somme was changed, and that of attempting to break through the German lines in one great rush—the Nivelle policy—was substituted. While Rawlinson believed, both during and after the battle of the Somme, that we could have conducted the "wearing-out battle" with equal success and less loss by more deliberate methods, he believed firmly in the general policy adopted by Sir Douglas Haig of wearing out the Germans before attempting a decisive break through, and always maintained that it had been justified by results. He frequently said that the German army was not again in such confusion, or its morale so low as it was in October, 1916, until October, 1918. The New Army of the British Empire had exhausted the army of Germany. His diary furnishes ample evidence of how carefully he watched his casualty lists, balancing them against results obtained, and how far removed his methods were from a policy of killing Germans regardless of British lives. It is well within the bounds of probability that if the British policy of the Somme had been matured, and the plan agreed upon by Joffre and Haig to resume the offensive in the beginning of February, 1917 had been adopted, we should have been spared the Nivelle disaster, with its terrible concomitants of the French mutiny and of Passchendaele, and have won the war in 1917.

CHAPTER IX

1917

AS early as the beginning of November, 1917, rumours of a crisis in the French command reached Rawlinson, and he was not surprised when Joffre was removed. Of Nivelle, he knew only that the credit for the success of the French attacks at Verdun was very generally ascribed to the new star which had arisen on the murky horizon of the war, and that "the Nivelle method" had numerous admirers in the French Army. He was soon to learn what the change in command portended.

"*January 3.*—Attended Army Commanders' Conference at Rollincourt, where D.H. gave out the scheme for the coming year." This was a fundamental change from the plan agreed upon between Haig and Joffre. The French were to make a great effort, mainly on the Champagne front, to break through the German lines, and were to be assisted by a British attack, to be delivered by the First and Third Armies about Arras. There was to be no attempt to renew the battle of the Somme, but the Germans were to be led to think that such was our intention. In order that the French might have the troops for their great effort, the Fourth Army was to carry out a great extension of its front south of the Somme. As soon as the French battle was ended, the British army was to attack in the North, and Rawlinson was to go up to Flanders to lead the battle. These changes presented an entirely new set of problems:

"*January 6.*—There is a lot to be considered and done. We are taking over, altogether, 18,000 yards more of front, which makes the Fourth Army line over 35,000. This will mean 13 divisions in the front line, and only 3 in reserve, as the Anzacs are putting in all their 4 divisions. The problem of taking on this front, and at the same time making the Boche believe that we are going to continue

the battle of the Somme, is an extremely difficult one. However, I hope I may be able to solve it satisfactorily." He had hardly begun to work out the solution when he learned that the problem was to be still more complicated. Nivelle wanted still more men, and the Fourth Army was to take over 17,000 more yards of front, but was to have some help from the Fifth Army, which was to take charge of part of its left. "Still I shall be very much strung out; 54,000 yards of line, which I shall have to hold with 12 divisions. Very thin, with practically nothing in reserve. Even now the conditions in the trenches are very trying. No chance of rest, and the men come out absolutely exhausted. As soon as the Arras attack begins, we shall be denuded of guns, but not, I think, of troops, as D.H. will not press on against a big concentration of Boche guns. He does not mean to maintain the battle of Arras as he did the Somme, but will send me up north with the Fourth Army to conduct the main attack at Ypres. This will not come off till July, at earliest. Meanwhile, mine is not a very desirable task; but other armies did the same for me during the Somme fighting, so I must conform with a good grace. Besides, we must do everything we can to help the French attack. The one thing that worries me is that all these changes take time. We have no indication of any Boche concentration by now, well on in January, and I am rather suspicious that he means to mass somewhere for a blow. I cannot think he will let us attack in our own time. He is up to something, and we are going to leave him the time to do it." It was not long before the something was disclosed.

In the meantime, Rawlinson was busy with the extension of his front, and, as usual, employed some of such leisure as he had in looking at the war as a whole. He was particularly interested in the talk of peace terms, which took place at the beginning of the year.

"*January 19.*—Mr. Balfour's letter to President Wilson, which was in yesterday's papers, is excellent, and I am having it printed for circulation to the army generally—some 30,000 copies, at least. It is right that all soldiers should know and appreciate the cause for which they are fight-

ing. Balfour's letter will raise the morale of the army as a whole, and I shall send it specially to all our schools. No better statement of the objects for which we are striving could have been written."[1]

There were lighter moments to relieve the consideration of these grave questions. "It is not often that anything funny comes out of Ypres, but I have been roaring with laughter over stories of two distinguished generals. W. had selected a day in the festive season to inspect one of his brigades. Just as he came on parade it was discovered that one of the men was too drunk to stand up, so he was hastily smuggled out of the ranks, put on a stretcher, and rolled up in a blanket behind the rear rank. W. in his inspection passed behind the line, and, seeing a body on a stretcher, halted in front of it, stood to attention, and saluting with much ceremony, said: 'I salute the honoured dead.' A thick and muffled voice replied from the blanket: 'What's the old b—— say?'

"On P's front, there are strict orders that all troops beyond a certain line are invariably to wear gas masks. P. one day was visiting his front, and found he had forgotten his mask. Meeting a man coming down from the front, he borrowed his mask-case, which the man handed over with considerable hesitation. On reaching the front, P. ran into a subaltern emerging from a dug-out without a mask-case. Having rated him soundly for his disobedience to orders he went on: 'Why, sir, I don't believe you even know how to put a mask on. Here, take mine, and let me see.' As soon as the transfer was made, P. roared out, 'Now, *gas!*' The trembling young officer with fumbling fingers undid the case, and drew out a pair of dirty socks! Some people have no luck."

Having completed the general arrangements for the relief of the French, Rawlinson went off for his first trip to our main base, Havre.

"*January 29.*—I am putting up here with Johnny Nicholson who is commandant of Havre. He has quite a

[1] Mr. Balfour's note, published in *The Times* of January 18, set forth our war aims, and declared that a German peace "would represent the triumph of all the forces which make war certain and make it brutal."

nice little house and seems in very good spirits, but is very full of work. It is an immense organization. One of the chief problems is how to economize men for the benefit of the front. I read Bob Lawson's[1] report. He is strongly in favour of using women on the lines of communication to replace men, but not at Army or General Head-quarters. I agree. There is much cutting down of the staff of clerks possible, and he makes out that we can get 25,000 'A' men fit for the trenches. There will, no doubt, be difficulties in introducing women if careful arrangements are not made, but they can be overcome. He proposes to have lady officers and superintendents with a regular system of discipline and command, and strict control when off duty. This will be very necessary, for an army of men who have been out of touch with women for many months cannot be trusted, and it is dangerous to introduce a lot of unprotected women amongst them. But women have done, and are doing, such good work at home that it would certainly be worth while to try the experiment out here.

"After a look round the camps, which are overcrowded with drafts, I went to the quays, where the congestion is worse, though they are more extensive than I anticipated. There is an immense accumulation of guns, ordnance stores, forage, and of a thousand and one things which pile up at a base port. This congestion is due to the fact that the French railways have practically stopped running, while the ships continue to come in. The failure of the French railways had been foreseen, but the new Director-General of Transport, Geddes,[2] has not yet been able to get out sufficient engines and trucks to supplement the French rolling-stock, and if the French railways really come to grief we may be in a serious plight. What worries me is that we have no reserves of rations and forage at the front. Geddes told me that February would be the dangerous time.[3]

"At the hospital on the wharf where the hospital ships are loaded, I met an old friend, in the shape of the matron who used to be at the Tidworth hospital. She was full of

[1] Lieutenant-General Sir R. Lawson. [2] Sir Eric Geddes.

[3] The breakdown of the French railways was the ostensible reason for the Anglo-French conference held at Calais at the end of February.

cheer and had everything in apple-pie order, but the rest camp presented a very different picture. There were over 6,000 men returning from leave and more coming in daily, with no trains to take them away, so that they are much overcrowded and very miserable in this cold weather. I called up the Quartermaster-General to say he ought to stop more men coming out. On the top of this block, two ships, each with 1,000 Kafirs on board, arrived. I then went on to see the ordnance workshops, where there is much activity. They were repairing rifles and machine-guns, and all sorts of guns up to 60-pounders. Colonel Davis, who is in charge, is a good man and knows his job, but it occurred to me that much of what he is doing could be equally well done at Amiens or some place nearer the front. This would save a deal of railway transport, but what they were doing they were doing well.

"My general opinion about Havre is that there is too much divided authority. The Naval Transport Officers bring the ships to the quays, but Nicholson rarely knows which berth they are coming to, which causes a deal of waste of time and labour. Nicholson is in charge of all camps, depots and shops; and now the new Transport Department is stepping in to run the trains, when there are any, and to unload the ships. There ought to be one Base Commandant in charge of the whole."

Rawlinson returned to his head-quarters at Querrieu on February 1. "Here I find things going on all right. The relief of the French down to the Roye road has been fixed up by Archie Montgomery. He is really an invaluable staff officer, the best I have ever known." There followed a short trip to the north to look into the plans for the summer campaign, and, in Flanders, Rawlinson caught a severe cold. To throw off the effects he went for a few days' leave to the Duke of Westminster's house in the Landes. On his way back he stopped at Beauvais, and there for the first time met General Nivelle.

"*February 25.*—Nivelle received me in his bureau and we had a long talk. He is certainly not as impressive a personality as Lyautey,[1] whom I saw in Paris. He gives

[1] Marshal Lyautey, then the French Minister of War.

one the idea of a bluff, honest soldier, who knows his tactics. He unfolded all his plans to me, saying that when he took over the command his forces were scattered all over the place with no arrangements for rapid concentration. Now he has all his resting divisions on lines of railway, so that they can be sent wherever required. He seems to think the Boche may try an offensive at Nancy, but will not allow this to stop his main attack between Soissons and Rheims. If the Germans do come on, he will stop them with as few troops as possible. He hopes to break the line with two armies, and to pass the third between them so as to debouch on the Sissone plain. Franchet d'Espérey's attack on St. Quentin on my right will be subsidiary. He said that if he did not succeed in breaking the line in 24 hours, it was no use going on. If he does, he will be a marvel. He astonished me by saying he did not know that the Boches had begun withdrawing from the front of the Fifth Army."[1]

On returning to his head-quarters, Rawlinson at once discovered the "something" which he had suspected that the Germans had up their sleeves.

"*February 27.*—It is clear that the Boche does not mean to give way on my front at once, though evidence is accumulating that it is his eventual intention to go back to the Hindenburg Line, which he has been constructing all the winter. I cannot possibly attack on a wide front both north and south of the Somme. I have neither the guns nor the men to do it. I think, if I were in D.H.'s place, I should switch off at once to the northern offensive at

[1] The withdrawal of the Germans, which developed into the retreat to the Hindenburg Line, began on February 24, and Rawlinson had heard of it by telephone from Montgomery. On March 6, Nivelle wrote to Sir Douglas Haig: "I do not intend to modify, for the present, the orders given to the group of armies of the north, on the front of which there is no definite indication to show that the enemy has decided to retreat." On March 7, Nivelle wrote to Franchet d'Espérey, who had proposed to him to press the retreating Germans at once: "It seems highly improbable that the enemy should abandon without fighting, or even without resisting to the utmost, one of the principal prizes which he holds, i.e. the nearest line to Paris . . . I decide, therefore, not to change the general plan of operations for 1917." There was at home considerable criticism because the Germans were allowed to make good their retreat. But the extension of the front of the Fourth Army on the Somme front made a prompt pursuit very difficult, and the general control of the operations had at the Calais conference been vested in Nivelle, who did not believe in the retreat till it was far advanced.

Ypres and Messines. The situation is interesting, but it is clear that it is no use going on with our present plans. The Boche withdrawal has upset them completely." When he wrote this, Rawlinson did not know that Haig's hands had been tied by the decisions of the Calais conference. He was soon to learn.

"*March 3.*—Philip Sassoon,[1] on D.H.'s instructions, told me what had happened at Calais. There was a distinct and rather underhanded attempt by Lloyd George and Briand to put the British armies in France, lock, stock and barrel under Nivelle; Wullie having been told nothing whatever about it.[2] The only reason I can see for it is a vague idea that unity of command is necessary, but with no clear thinking as to how it is to be brought about. The very fact of the War Cabinet thinking of such an arrangement makes one lose confidence in them. I hope the modified arrangement will work all right,[3] but it makes me anxious. Wullie has a difficult part to play, for L.G. is evidently out to shift Haig if he can."

Rawlinson watched the German retreat with mingled feelings.

"*March 26.*—Busy in the office all morning, studying the new photos of the Hindenburg Line, which shows a vast amount of work. This Boche move is certainly clever; it shortens his line and gives him a stronger reserve. It has made us miss our opportunity, and has upset Nivelle's plans. What does the enemy mean to do with his reserve? I am inclined to think that he intends to draw us into the desert which he has created, and then counter-attack us. I shall follow him up with light forces only, and keep reserves well in hand, so that if he does try that game, he will strike a blow in the air. He may have another go for Ypres, or he may attack Italy. These seem his three most likely ventures. The curse of it is that, having won the initiative at great cost on the Somme, we have now to speculate

[1] Sir Philip Sassoon, private secretary to Sir D. Haig.

[2] Sir William Robertson was informed that the conference was to deal with the crisis in the French railways.

[3] The modified arrangement was that Haig was to conform to Nivelle's instructions for operations, while remaining in control of his armies with power to appeal to his Government if he considered the safety of his troops jeopardized by the French orders.

what the German is going to do, instead of making him do what we want."

These somewhat gloomy reflections were relieved by the news of the battle of Arras.

"*April 10.*—The First and Third Armies have done magnificently. They have got the whole of the Vimy Ridge and Monchy le Preux, with 11,000 prisoners and 100 guns, 178 machine-guns and 60 trench-mortars. A really splendid success. I have sent congratulatory telegrams to Allenby and Horne. I wonder if I was wrong, and if the Boche is going to crack after all. If we really can hustle him out of the Hindenburg Line, we shall end the war this year."

This flicker of hope did not last long. On April 15 he had moved his head-quarters forward from Querrieu to a hut encampment at Villers-Carbonnel, to be closer in touch with events on the Hindenburg Line, which his advanced troops were approaching. Hardly was he established in his new home, when he learned that Nivelle's great attack had failed to achieve a tithe of what had been expected of it.

The one prospect left of winning victory in 1917 was the British attack in the north, and on this Rawlinson's expectations were centred, only to receive a personal disappointment.

"*May 7.*—I attended the Army Commanders' Meeting at Doullens to-day, and, as I expected, I found that D.H. had decided to make the switch to the north; but I was very much disappointed when I heard that Gough is to have the northern part of the attack, and that when I have been relieved down here I am to go into reserve. This is a blow, as I had been looking forward to that northern attack, though it is a difficult one. D.H. said nothing to me directly about it and, of course, I said nothing to him, though for a moment I was tempted to remind him that he had told me I was to have it."

Two days later he got an inkling of the reason for the change.

"*May 10.*—On thinking things over, I was convinced that D.H. had some special reason for keeping the Fourth

Army in reserve, when Tavish[1] flew over to lunch. He gave me several messages from D.H., to the effect that I should be required for very important amphibious operations on Gough's left along the coast, if things went well. At present everything depends upon a number of problematical circumstances, and nothing can yet be said with any degree of certainty." This was the first hint at the scheme, which in the event never matured, for a surprise landing on the Belgian coast, to be made when the attack on the Ypres front had progressed sufficiently. The operations at sea were to be in charge of Admiral Bacon, and those on land under Rawlinson's control. Naturally, the greatest pains were taken to keep the project secret, and even now, eleven years later, comparatively few people know of what was to have been an important element in Sir Douglas Haig's campaign in Flanders in the autumn of 1917.

Before taking up the detailed investigation of this project, Rawlinson went to spend a night with Sir Henry Wilson at Nivelle's head-quarters.

"*May 12.*—I have had a long talk with H.W. this afternoon. He is very pessimistic about the general aspect of affairs. He thinks we must be prepared for Russia coming to an agreement with the Germans, or for a civil war in Russia, which is saturated with German agents. She won't be able to do anything in Asia, with the result that a large combination may be formed against Maude, who has only five divisions to defend a huge area. In Palestine, he says the Turks are in a strong position, and we cannot look for any further successes there. In other theatres H.W. does not think there is any prospect of developments in our favour. Meanwhile, things are very far from satisfactory in France. He has been, and is, in very close touch with both Nivelle and Pétain. There have been three Cabinet meetings in the last twenty-four hours, and Nivelle has been twice dismissed and replaced by Pétain, and now Nivelle is to remain for the present. The French Government is very shaky, and there is no one sufficiently secure in his seat to make plans which can be relied on. All this makes D.H.'s job infernally difficult. He has had to keep

[1] Major-General Sir J. Davidson.

on fighting at Arras much longer than he wanted to, in order to help the French out of a hole, and that means so much less power for the northern offensive. We are already below strength."[1]

The weeks passed quickly in working out the detailed plans for the new enterprise, which involved frequent conferences with Admiral Bacon at Dunkirk and in the Thames estuary, where the naval preparations were being carried out. On June 7, Sir Herbert Plumer made his successful attack on the Messines Ridge, and straightened out the deadly Ypres salient for the first time since October, 1914. This brilliant achievement made the prospects of the campaign in Flanders, which resulted in the grim struggle for the Passchendaele Ridge, look rosy, and on July 5, Sir Douglas Haig issued his formal orders for that campaign, directing the Fourth Army, as and when the main attack to the east of Ypres made progress, to land with the assistance of Admiral Bacon's naval forces on the coast east of Nieuport, and eventually to advance, in conjunction with the main attack, upon Bruges, the enemy's main submarine depot on the Belgian coast.[2]

Three days before this order was issued, Rawlinson had moved to his new head-quarters at Terminus Malo, just outside Dunkirk, and he was there when the King made his first visit to the Belgian front:

"*July 5.*—To-day I lunched with the King of the Belgians to meet our King. We had a distinguished party, including

[1] It was not until nearly three months later that Rawlinson learned the true reason for Sir Henry Wilson's pessimism. The morale of the French army had been gravely affected by Nivelle's failure. M. Painlevé, then Minister of War in M. Ribot's cabinet, says of this period: "Resentment among the troops against the staff, and particularly against G.H.Q., became pronounced. The severest punishment of those responsible was demanded. There were daily quarrels between the infantry, the artillery and the airmen, the former reproaching the latter for having massacred them or left them to be massacred. The French Army has never passed through so formidable a crisis." ("Comment j'ai nommé Foch et Pétain," p. 72) This crisis developed into actual mutiny on May 4, and the mutinies continued until June 15. The greatest precautions were taken to prevent news of these occurrences from spreading, and it was not until August that they became known even to our army commanders. Thus the Germans did not get to learn of them until they were fully engaged in meeting our attacks in Flanders. Three days after Rawlinson's talk with Sir Henry Wilson on May 15, Nivelle was replaced as Commander-in-Chief by Pétain, whose place as Chief of the Staff was taken by Foch.

[2] The Bruges-Ostend and Bruges-Zeebrugge canals provided communication with the sea.

the two kings, the Queen of the Belgians, the Prince of Wales, looking extraordinarily fit, the Earl of Athlone and his wife, Admiral Bacon, du Cane, General Rocroy, and another officer of the Belgian Army, and Lady Byng in waiting on Lady Athlone. After a pleasant lunch I took the King to see a 12-inch howitzer and a 9·2 gun in concrete emplacements. We have not half our guns up yet, but I was able to show him these, and then I took him on to the Bray Dunes Aerodrome, where Beck gave him an exhibition with the Sopwith Camels. It was the first time I had seen them, and I was very pleased with their looks. In the motor the King decorated me with the G.C.V.O., which pleased me greatly, as I had not the least idea that I was to receive so high an honour. My first Grand Cross!"

The relief of the French, who had been holding the Nieuport coastal sector, was completed on the morning of July 8, and Rawlinson then assumed command. His troops consisted mainly of the XVth Corps under General du Cane; the 1st Division of which, under General Strickland, was to be specially and secretly trained for the landing. Before moving to its training camp the 1st Division went into the line, and there it was attacked on July 10 by the Germans, who, knowing that the section was a particularly difficult one to defend, determined to drive it in before the troops were well settled into their new positions, and before our supporting artillery was in its place. This inauspicious beginning of the new front Rawlinson described in a letter to Lord Derby written on July 14: "Since I took over command up here the Germans have given us a lively time. Having ascertained through their agents that there was a likelihood of our assuming an offensive in the north, an impression which was confirmed by our taking over the Nieuport sector from the French, they determined to anticipate us by themselves putting in an attack before we were prepared. This they did on July 10, two days after I took over command, and they met, I am sorry to say, with a considerable amount of success. The section of the Dunes area on the eastern or right bank of the Yser was in every way a suitable objective for them, for it was approachable only by three floating bridges across the mouth of a tidal

river, and if these were destroyed communication with the troops on the right bank was completely cut off. They chose their time well, and their objective was an easy one. I only wonder they had not gone for it on some previous occasion. We had only just relieved the French, the trenches in the Dunes were very bad, and our artillery was in numbers less than half of what the Germans had available, so the result is not surprising. After a heavy bombardment, which lasted twenty-four hours and destroyed the bridges early in the day, they put in a strong infantry attack, and smothered two fine battalions, the 2nd, 60th, and the 1st, Northamptons, which were holding our positions on the other side of the river. These two battalions never really got a chance of defending themselves. Many of the men were buried in the sand, which the German shells threw up like eruptions from small volcanos; they were cut off by the river from any assistance, and only some five officers and seventy men, who swam across after dark, got back. The enemy's left attack on Nieuport itself failed, as did another attack he made last night. I shall not be happy till the 16th or 17th, by which time a sufficient number of guns will have arrived to keep his gun fire down. Then we shall set ourselves to work to take our revenge.

"You seem to be having rather a difficult time at home. This Mesopotamian Commission is most unfortunate. It has already done a great deal of harm, and may do more, whilst in no circumstances can it possibly do any good. No examples that you may make of individuals will do any good unless you change the system. What you must do is to remodel the Government of India as a whole, and regulate the financial and military requirements on a common-sense basis. When you are Viceroy, I will come out as your Commander-in-Chief, and we will get things into shape."

The damage done by the Germans was soon repaired, but the position they had won on the right bank of the Yser made the problem of the combined attack from land and sea more complicated. None the less, the preparations went on. The 1st Division was withdrawn from the lines and went into its secret training camp, and Admiral Bacon

was busy in the Thames. Though, owing to the failure of the main attack to make the progress hoped for and the unexpectedly early break-up of the weather, the landing was never attempted, the preparations for it are of such interest that I give the very clear summary of them made by General Montgomery for the records of the Fourth Army:

1. A suitable encampment was constructed on the Dunes near Le Clipon (6 miles S.W. of Dunkirk), and the whole force destined to take part in the landing operations was collected in the camp by July 18, 1917.

As it was essential to preserve the utmost secrecy, the whole camp was surrounded by a wire fence and guarded. Only troops destined to take part in the operation were kept inside, and as far as possible all leakage of information was prevented.

All leave was suspended, and a special censorship was inaugurated at the Base for dealing with letters from the "interned" force.

2. On July 21, the landing force commenced a period of special training, which consisted in practising the troops in scaling a sea-wall of the type which would be met with, and in rehearsing schemes for the embarkation and landing.

For this purpose an actual replica of the sea-wall on the enemy's coast was constructed, and full-size plans of the monitor decks and pontoons were marked out on the ground.

A model (scale 1:300) of the coast to be invaded was constructed in the camp, with a view to facilitating the study of all the tactical situations likely to arise.

3. The Naval force, consisting of six 12-inch monitors with three pontoons and various small craft, was isolated in a secluded reach of the Thames.

Towards the end of July a meeting was arranged between the officers of the Naval force and the officers of the landing force.

The Army Commander and Staff, together with the 1st Divisional Commander, Brigadiers, Staffs and Commanding Officers, were taken by destroyer to the Naval

base in the Thames and spent twenty-four hours on board the monitors.

A demonstration was carried out of the navigation of the pontoons, and conferences were held between the various naval and military commanders and their staffs.

Later, visits for individual officers were arranged to settle further details with regard to accommodation and supply during the sea voyage.

4. The use of tanks in the operation presented considerable difficulties, as arrangements had to be made to enable them to climb the sea-wall. The slope of the wall, as far as could be ascertained from plans, was about 1 in 2; at the top of the slope the wall rose almost perpendicularly for about 2 feet 6 inches. Further complications were caused owing to the shape and height of the perpendicular portion varying along different lengths of the wall. After a large number of trials, a special ramp, to be carried by the tank and suspended from the front of it, was designed to enable the tanks to climb the perpendicular portion. This proved quite successful, and all the tanks and drivers who were detailed for the undertaking were duly practised in climbing the wall. Having climbed the wall, one tank at each point of landing was to be used to haul guns and limbers on to the top.

5. All preparations for carrying out the operations were complete by the middle of August, but, owing to the slow rate of progress of operations further south, no definite date for carrying out the landing was ever settled.

During the summer on the coast, bathing was naturally a favourite recreation in the intervals of training. Rawlinson had a good story of a dip in the sea taken by one of his generals, who was inclined to *embonpoint*. "X was bathing at La Panne one morning. The shore there is sandy, and shelves very quickly, and as he swam along he ran aground. Feeling the sand rubbing him on the place where the bottom of his waistcoat would be when he was clothed, he tried to stand up. He was out of his depth!"

As early as the beginning of August, Rawlinson began

to have doubts whether the scheme to which he had given so much time and thought would mature. On the 4th, he wrote: "We complete the third year of the war. I see no reason why it should not go on for another year or eighteen months, if the Boche succeeds in getting possession of the wheat areas of Southern Russia. The Allies can quite well go on for another two years, by which time we shall have a really large American army in the field. We hold all the best cards in the pack, and have only to play them correctly in order to win a complete victory. To-day, after seeing the 1st Division pack the pontoons and vehicles, I went off to tea with the Fifth Army, and found Gough cursing the weather. All front lines and no man's land are simply quagmires. I don't see how we can assume the offensive again for at least ten days. The Lombartzyde front is nothing but a mass of shell-holes, each and all of which are full of water to the brim. The men in the trenches have a miserable time, despite all we try to do for them, and this weather takes the spirit out of them far more than do the Boche shells.

"Smuts, in a letter I got from him this morning, says the Russians have lost a good many of our guns of all calibres from 4·5-inch howitzers to 12-inch. It is too disgusting to think that we should have our own guns brought against us, after having given them to the Russians. If we cannot clear the Germans out of the Belgian coast this autumn, we shall find the Germans bringing 40 or 50 divisions over from the Russian front, and we shall find ourselves on the defensive waiting for the Americans. Not a pleasant prospect, particularly as I hear that the man-power situation at home is bad. The Government refuse to comb out any more men, and Lloyd George is proposing to reduce our divisions to nine battalions, which would be madness. The French will certainly make us take over more of their line this winter, and I shall probably have to go south."

All of these prophecies proved in the event to be well founded.

With his plans completed, and the training of his troops well advanced, Rawlinson had little to do but to watch and wait, a rôle he found it hard to fill with patience. A

gleam of sunshine broke through the clouds when the tactical methods he had long advocated were adopted by G.H.Q.:

"*August 8.*—A letter from G.H.Q. arrived this morning, pointing out that the new German tactics were to organize defence in depth, and rely chiefly upon counter-attack. Should not, they ask, our major tactics be altered to meet them by limiting our objective and reducing the numbers of troops on the front of assault? This is what I advocated *before* the battle of the Somme, and I have always been in favour of it. I am replying in this sense, welcoming the limited objective."

But new methods of attack could not dry the mud of Flanders, and progress to the east of Ypres continued to be slow and costly. For the attack on the coast it was necessary to use the high tides which occurred at this season in the early days of each month. At the beginning of September sufficient progress had not been made to justify an enterprise which, at best, involved great risks, and when the beginning of October came, and the situation was not much improved, Rawlinson went home for a few days' leave, arriving in London just in time for the air-raid of October 1. "I find people a good deal worried at the effect of these raids on the population of London. The tubes are full of aliens, who collect there by thousands and spend all the night in them. There is also a good deal of uneasiness about our Flanders offensive. I went to tea with Smuts, who was just back from a meeting of the War Cabinet. They had had Trenchard over for a special meeting on raids and reprisals. I pressed upon him the desirability of continuing the coastal offensive, but he would not commit himself to any definite opinion on the subject. At the Travellers' I had a long talk with Henry Wilson. He is opposed to the Flanders attack. I jotted down his points and my replies. He says:

'(i) The mud of Flanders makes it impossible for fighting during six months of the year, and the climatic conditions are less advantageous for airmen and artillery than many other parts of the front.

'(ii) The capture of Ostend and Zeebrugge will not

win us the war, and their importance to the Navy has been greatly exaggerated.

'(iii) Clearing the Germans from the coast won't help the French. We must drive them back out of France in order to preserve the spirit of the French nation. The capture of Mézières would be more important than the capture of the coast.

'(iv) Peace terms must include the evacuation of Belgium, so why waste lives in turning the Germans out of that country?

'(v) Mud stops operations in Flanders. Snow stops operations in Italy. Why not reinforce Egypt by lending Allenby troops during the winter months?

"My answer:

"(i) The weather in Flanders this summer has been abnormal, and abnormal conditions do not make a plan bad. There was no mud when Plumer captured the Wytschaete ridge.

"(ii) Both the Government and the Admiralty have been continually impressing Haig with the importance of preventing the Germans from using Ostend and Zeebrugge as submarine bases. It will be of no use to win the war on land, if England is starved out by German submarines.

"(iii) To give the French time to recover, we must keep the Germans occupied. They must either fight on the coast, or give it up. If we attack towards Mézières, the Germans will do what they did at the beginning of the year—go back to another Hindenburg Line. Then they will attack the French farther south.

"(iv) The evacuation of France must equally be a part of the peace terms. This argument means that we should not fight at all on the Western front. By clearing the Belgian coast, we make it more difficult for the Germans to bomb London and easier for us to bomb Essen.

"(v) If we send troops to Allenby, how can we be sure of getting them back when the Germans bring their troops from Russia? In any case, this would use up a lot of shipping, when we want all we can get to keep England fed, and to bring Americans over,"

By the middle of October the coastal enterprise was definitely abandoned, and the carefully trained 1st Division left the Fourth Army on October 21. Pétain was at this time pressing Haig hard to take over more of the French line in the south as soon as the battle of Flanders was over, and there were hints that if an agreement was not reached the question would be referred to the French Government. Haig, therefore, sent Rawlinson to see Pétain, to examine the French front and to advise him.

"*October 21.*—I lunched with D.H. to-day on my way to the French. He put me in possession of the situation, as far as he is concerned, and showed me all his correspondence, both with Wullie and with Pétain. He is very reluctant to take over more line from the French, but thinks he may be forced into it. If he is, he will not take over more than the front of four divisions, and he has commissioned me to go over the ground and to discuss it with Pétain.

"Haig told me a good story of one of his inspections. He was looking at a battalion of one of the Kitchener Armies, and was fraternizing with the men, as was his custom. As he passed down the ranks, he came upon a stalwart private who looked to be a good deal older than the rest, some forty years of age. Haig said to him: 'Well, and how did you start the war?'

"The man drew himself up stiffly, and replied: 'Oo says I started this 'ere blinkin' war?'"

"*October 22.*—I tackled Pétain on the subject of taking over more line. He was very insistent on our relieving the whole of his Third Army, but I told him D.H. would not run to more than four divisions. He does not expect much help from the Americans before the late summer, and is very apprehensive of what the Germans will do in the spring with the divisions they can bring over from Russia. We are certainly in for a very difficult time in the spring, before the Americans are of much help to us, especially if the Russians go farther down hill, and allow the Germans to bring thirty to forty divisions over here. Still, I think if D.H. sticks to his front of four divisions Pétain will give way. On my way to Châlons, I called

on Micheler. He thinks the Boche will throw himself on Italy next year, as it is the only theatre in which he has any chance of winning a great success."

Before his trip was ended, Rawlinson got the news that the Germans had already struck their blow in Italy. Of his impressions of Caporetto, and the remainder of his visit to the French front, he wrote to Colonel Clive Wigram on October 31:

"You will probably have seen Cavan before receiving this letter, so I will not bother you with stories of the recent fighting on the Ypres front. Suffice it to say that our progress has been neither so rapid, nor so successful, as we had hoped a month ago. When the Boche has realized that we intend to persist, and has had time to collect and organize his artillery, the losses we suffer usually increase, and the progress we make is expensive both in lives and material. Pétain always says that once the Boche has been given time to bring up reinforcements, the moment has arrived to stop and try elsewhere, but if we want to drive the enemy from the coast such procedure is impossible. To-day's attack by the XVIIIth and Canadian Corps was successful only on the Canadian front, though the objective was only some eight hundred yards in depth. As far as we can make out, the Fifth Army and the XVIIIth Corps hardly made any progress, partly on account of the weather and partly because of the sodden state of the ground.

"Now, just as we had hoped to finish up the Flanders offensive with the winning of Passchendaele, comes the news of the Italian disaster. It is, I imagine, chiefly for political reasons that we are sending Cavan and a couple of good divisions to help Cadorna, for they can hardly reach the Italian theatre in time to be of much use in the operations now in progress; but we may have to support them with further troops, and this will certainly upset D.H.'s dispositions here on the Western front. I am doubly sorry for this; firstly, because the withdrawal of any considerable number of troops will force us at once into a defensive attitude, and transfer the initiative into the hands of the enemy; and, secondly, because when the question of sending troops to Italy first cropped up both Wullie and

D.H. opposed it very strongly, so that Lloyd George will claim that he was right and they were wrong. This will not make things any easier for them.

"I am just back from a most interesting trip to the French front. I went first to Verdun, where I carefully examined the terrain, and I now realize far better than before how much credit is due to the French for defending Verdun, but also particularly for having assumed the offensive in most difficult circumstances, and for having driven the German back almost to his original line. Things have not yet quieted down, and the French will have to undertake another attack on the right bank of the Meuse before they can feel quite happy with their positions.

"I saw all the generals in the higher commands, and found them in great spirits after the success at Soissons. It was a very well conducted affair; well planned, admirably prepared and brilliantly carried out by General Maistre, an old friend of mine of Loos days. They captured 10,000 prisoners, and only suffered 7,000 casualties, which is about a record, I think, for such an operation. On the left, the Germans hardly fought at all; owing to the French having broken all the passages over the canal behind them, and thus prevented all supplies of food, water and ammunition from reaching the front lines. The Boche was starved, and in three of the field batteries captured there was no ammunition."

More troops were sent to Italy, and the Government appointed Sir Herbert Plumer to command our army in that country. Sir Hubert Gough went south to prepare for taking over part of the French front; and the Second and Fifth Armies were united and placed under the command of Rawlinson, who moved his head-quarters to Cassel on November 9. Here the business of directing eight army corps, and cleaning up the debris of a prolonged battle, kept him very busy. He welcomed the creation of the Supreme War Council, and watched with regret the promising beginning of Byng's attack on Cambrai on November 20, turn to one more failure. But his chief preoccupation was with the future. Our strength in France was steadily diminishing, the German strength as steadily increasing.

"*December 7.*—I attended our Army Commanders' Conference at Doullens to-day, at which Byng and I were the only two present. The man-power position is really very serious, and I gather there is little hope of divisions being made up to strength. Fowke[1] told me that, without special measures to reinforce us, we should be 150,000 men below establishment in the spring, and 500,000 down by the autumn. The Germans are bringing over divisions at the rate of ten a month from Russia, so that by the end of February we are likely to have a lively time. Anyhow, we shall be thrown on the defensive, and shall have to fight for our lives as we did at the first battle of Ypres. We have had no luck this year. There is something radically wrong with the general management of the war by the Allies. The politicians insist in butting in just at the wrong time. First we get the Boche into a bad hole on the Somme, and, just as all plans are made for taking advantage of this, they are stopped, and an entirely new set of plans is introduced, which allows the Boche four months to recover from the situation which we have created by four months of strenuous effort. Then we go for the enemy again in Flanders and, despite the most exceptional and poisonous weather, we not only keep the Boche fully occupied and give Pétain time to pull the French Army together, but once more we take the stuffing out of him.[2] Again, just as we are ready to take advantage of that situation, and have a real chance of doing something big at Cambrai which will repay us for all the losses at Passchendaele, the Government orders off to Italy the divisions which would have made Cambrai a real victory. I said at the time that they could not arrive early enough to be of any real use in Italy, and now I hear that the Austro-Boche attack had come to a standstill before they got there. Haig told me that he had sent Kiggell over to London to see Lloyd George before Cambrai, and to beg that three of Plumer's divisions might be left for the

[1] General Fowke, then Adjutant-General at G.H.Q.

[2] "What the German soldier experienced, achieved and suffered in the Flanders battle will be his everlasting monument of bronze, erected by himself in the enemys' land . . . and yet it must be admitted that certain units no longer triumphed over the demoralizing effects of the defensive battle as they had formerly done." Ludendorff. "My War Memories," p. 492.

battle, in which case he, Haig, was confident of a really big success. L.G. had answered that he had heard enough prophecies of big successes, and that the divisions were to go to Italy. The fact is that L.G. does not trust D.H., and it is hard to win a war when the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief don't get on. I hope the new Versailles Council will improve things. Anyway, it's high time we had a change of some sort. With more agreement in high quarters, both in France and at home, and a little more sound sense, we might have won the war this year."

Rawlinson was at first disposed to think that the German attack of 1918 would be made on his own front, as our new lines on the Passchendaele ridge were far from secure, but on further consideration changed his mind. On January 13, he went down to Versailles to see Sir Henry Wilson in his new position as British Military Representative on the Supreme War Council: "H.W. proceeded to give me two hours of his doings at Versailles. He is running a war game on large-scale maps, as he used to do before the war when he was D.M.O. at the War Office. These war games are good, but they omit the personal element, and so are liable to lead to false conclusions. In the present case, he makes out that by July 1 the German will have a striking force of no less than 96 divisions by bringing 60 divisions over from Russia. With these he could put in a strong attack by 30 divisions against us in June, with the Bruay coal area as his objective; another attack of 30 divisions against the French in Champagne; and still have 36 divisions for a final blow at the point of junction of the French and British armies, with Compiègne or Paris as the objective. I told him that I agreed with the G.H.Q. view that the Boche could not afford to wait till June, and would probably attack us on the St. Quentin front first, and afterwards in Flanders, perhaps as early as the end of February, certainly in March."

On January 27, Rawlinson wrote to Lord Derby:

"I have read the German Chancellor's speech with some care, but can see in it no indication of a settlement. From the attitude he takes up, I deduce that the military party in Berlin have got their way, and will be allowed to make

one more desperate attempt to win the war, by assuming the offensive on the West at no distant date. Some people think, and H.W. at Versailles agrees with them, that the Boche will not strike until he has his full strength in men and guns assembled in the West, and this cannot be until the month of June, owing to paucity of engines and rolling-stock. I do not agree. I think he will be forced to begin his offensive before that, possibly as early as the end of February, for pressure, both from his allies outside and unrest inside, will, I think, oblige him to engage in active operations in the West, even if he does not launch his main attack until April or May. The fuss they are making at home, both about the Cambrai affair and the higher command out here, I confess, alarms me. Mercifully the army takes little interest in either, for they feel sure that Wullie and D.H. are strong enough to withstand the mud that is being thrown at them.

"People talk of a surprise, a panic, and of officers running about in their pyjamas. Do you realize that the Germans have been doing exactly the same for the last two years at the Somme, Arras, Vimy, Messines and in Flanders? They do not try to make scapegoats, but accept the inevitable, learn their lessons and try all they can to do better next time. We, on the other hand, hold inquiries, examine officers and men, agitate in the House of Commons, in order to crucify someone because our line was pressed back on a wider front than usual. It is not making for efficiency to turn our soldiers' minds out here on the inquiries regarding the past, when they ought to be straining every nerve to prepare for the future. The British public and the House of Commons must get accustomed to the Cambrais, for I should not be surprised if we had several more of them this year. We are going to have a pretty hard time, but, whatever it may produce, it will be less unpleasant than 1914, and I am absolutely certain that we shall pull through all right in the end, so long as the War Cabinet do not lose their nerve and do something stupid. But we do expect Ministers to support the soldiers whole-heartedly. We want more men, and I shall be happier when the new American battalions are landed in this country and dis-

tributed to our brigades. I wonder if the Boche will give us time for this?"

On February 6, Rawlinson learned from the Commander-in-Chief something of what had passed at the momentous meeting of the Supreme War Council, which had met at Versailles a few days before, and had appointed an executive committee to create and control a general reserve for the Western front.

"I went to G.H.Q. to lunch with D.H. to-day. He is well and full of confidence. He told me that Foch as President of the Executive Committee was generalissimo in fact, if not in name. He also said that Lloyd George was very displeased with Wullie, and was trying to get rid of him and of Derby, with a view to getting in Milner as Secretary of State for War. The General Reserve has been created on paper, but no one has yet discovered where the troops for it are to come from. I wish they would bring the troops back from Italy. D.H. says he does not expect the Boche to attack in Flanders at present; but he thought that, after he had made his attacks in Picardy and Champagne, he might make a big effort in Flanders with the object of gaining the Channel ports."

On February 17, Rawlinson received a telegram summoning him to London, and on reaching the War Office he learned that Sir W. Robertson had been dismissed; that Sir H. Wilson was to be Chief of the Imperial General Staff; and that he was to go to Versailles as British Military Representative.

CHAPTER X

1918—VERSAILLES: THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FOURTH ARMY

THE Supreme War Council, at its meeting at the end of January and the beginning of February, had decided to form an Executive War Board, composed of its military representatives, with Foch as chairman, and had charged this new body with the creation and control of a General Reserve on the Western front. Sir W. Robertson had protested against this decision as being impracticable, and had been transferred by the Government from the War Office to the Eastern Command at home. On reaching London on February 17, Rawlinson, after a call at the War Office, had driven down to Kingston, where Sir Douglas Haig was staying for a few days: "D.H. was very frank, and told me the whole story. He could not account for Wullie's action in refusing to go to Versailles.[1] He then said that he had been over to Walton Heath with Derby, to see the Prime Minister, and had been ordered by him to appoint an officer not below the rank of Army Commander to be British Military Representative at Versailles. He had replied that he would nominate me if Plumer were allowed to come back from Italy to take my place. This the Prime Minister agreed to, and Haig said he was obviously pleased at my being selected. I told D.H. that I had no axe to grind, nor any personal feeling in the matter, my only anxiety being to help him and the Government to win the war. In these circumstances, I had no option to refuse the appointment, and Haig told me that if I did he would order me to take it. We then discussed the future, and came to a very amicable arrange-

[1] Sir W. Robertson refused the offer of the appointment of British Military Representative at Versailles because he disagreed with the principle of placing the General Reserve under the control of the Executive War Board. See "From Private to Field-Marshal," p. 335 *et seq.*

ment to work entirely in unison. He told me that he could not agree to earmark any more divisions for the General Reserve than the two that were coming from Italy, as he says that to do so would upset all his defensive arrangements at a time when a great attack on his front was imminent. This I agree with. The Executive Committee should never have issued the letter they have sent.[1] It is impossible for them to decide how many divisions a Commander-in-Chief requires to hold his front. D.H. showed me the paper containing my instructions and his, which has been signed by the Prime Minister. I shall get a copy from Derby to-morrow. The position is not an easy one, and there may be difficult times if things go wrong on the front, but I have great confidence in being able to work harmoniously with Henry Wilson and D.H. I intend to have Archie Montgomery and Fred Maurice as my two major-generals. It will be an immensely interesting and historic time."

"*February 20.*—My birthday; and I enter my 55th year. To celebrate the occasion, I had breakfast with the King and Queen, *tête-à-tête*. Only His Majesty, the Queen and Princess Mary present. They were extremely kind and pleasant, and gave me a whiting and some marmalade for breakfast. The King has not been too well since his accident, and has been ordered cream. He honoured me by giving me some. The Queen and Princess Mary were not allowed any. There are a good many messes in France where they have a better breakfast than the Royal Family has."

"*February 21.*—Crossed yesterday, and have spent a sad day in saying good-bye to my dear old Fourth Army. I went round in the morning to see all the corps and divisional commanders, and assembled my staff after lunch at the office, where I made them a little speech expressing my great gratitude to them for all they had done, and wishing them every good fortune in the future. I likewise assembled the Flying Corps squadron commanders at Beck's head-

[1] The Executive War Board had decided to create a General Reserve of 30 divisions and to direct the British Commander-in-Chief to contribute 8. As will be seen, the letter to Sir D. Haig asking for this contribution was not dispatched to him from Versailles until February 28, but its terms were known early in February.

quarters, and congratulated them on their recent success. They have being doing marvellously well recently."

"*February 22.*—On my way to Versailles, I stopped at Compiègne, where I met Tavish and Clive.[1] The former told me the general plan arranged between Haig and Pétain for the defence of the Western front, and I fully agree with it. I lunched with Pétain. He showed me the correspondence which had taken place between Foch and himself on the subject of the divisions to be allotted to the General Reserve. It has now been settled that Pétain shall hold eight divisions in General Reserve. D.H. will not agree to more than the two, which are to come back from Italy. Now the Italian Government has protested against their being withdrawn."

"*February 23.*—All day in the office. I had long talks with Weygand, Bliss and Gallieni,[2] my colleagues on the Military Representatives Board, and I liked them. Of course, I have known Weygand for years, and I think I made a friend of Gallieni. Bliss is an excellent fellow, and I am sure we shall all get on well. I shall need all my tact to get this question of the reserve settled. It ought never to have been raised. I cannot help thinking there is some political motive behind it. If it is merely L.G.'s method of getting rid of Wullie, it is a cumbrous and dangerous way of doing it. I must have another talk with D.H."

"*February 25.*—I left Paris at 9.15 a.m., went to Boulogne to meet H.W., and brought him with me to Montreuil to dine with the Chief. Before dinner we discussed the reserve. H.W.'s point is that if Haig contributes eight divisions to the General Reserve he will get more help from the French than he would in any other way, if the Boche attacks him. Haig's answer is that if he sends any divisions away he cannot be responsible for the safety of his front, and of his army, as, owing to the shortage of men, he has barely sufficient troops now to meet the attack which the Germans are preparing to make on him. If he hands over his divi-

[1] Major-General Clive, head of the British Mission at French head-quarters.

[2] The French, American and Italian Military Representatives. General Weygand was also Foch's Chief of the Staff.

sions to the Executive Board, they, at Versailles, will not get information as quickly as he will, they will be in doubt as to where the main German attack is coming, and will hold on to the reserve until they know. Meantime, the British line may be broken. So he refuses to budge from his position of not giving up any more divisions than the two from Italy. H.W. was rather nonplussed, for D.H.'s arguments are unanswerable. He is the only man who can say how many divisions he needs to hold his front, and he naturally does not place any reliance on a committee acting promptly. After dinner he told me that he had seen Clemenceau and told him his views, and that Clemenceau was quite in sympathy with them."

"*February 26.*—Henry Wilson took me to see Clemenceau at 6 p.m., and he gave me a very cordial welcome. We discussed the question of the General Reserve, and he is, I think, agreeable to the question remaining as it is, and appreciates Haig's point of view."

"*February 27.*—This morning I went with Henry Wilson to see Foch, and to explain to him D.H.'s reply regarding the General Reserve. He was not as disturbed as I expected, but insisted in having it in writing, so I am sending the letter officially to Tavish to-morrow so that he may get an answer the day after, as D.H. is away. I argued the matter out thoroughly with Foch and Weygand. They asked for D.H.'s scheme of defence, saying they already had those of Pétain and Diaz."

The next day Rawlinson wrote to Sir Douglas Haig: "Henry Wilson and I saw Foch and Weygand at his office yesterday, and informed him of your reply regarding the General Reserve. He apparently knew of your meeting with Clemenceau and was, therefore, not surprised at what we had to say. He pressed for a reply from you in writing to the letter of February 6, signed by the Military Representatives and dealing with the General Reserve. I find that this letter has not been sent to you officially, so I am sending it to-day by special messenger to G.H.Q., and Tavish will bring it to you to-morrow. Foch asked for your scheme of defence of the British front, saying that he had received those of Pétain and Diaz, but, so far, knew

nothing of the British plans. I told him I would ask you for this."

On March 1, Rawlinson wrote to Sir Henry Wilson: "As regards D.H.'s plans of defence and arrangements with the French, they are being sent to us complete with maps, etc., accompanied by a request to us to criticize them in any way we like.

"*March 3.*—I received D.H.'s reply this afternoon, and lay it before the Executive to-morrow. I shall support his argument to the best of my ability, and hope to get at least Bliss on my side, but I shall have to do some lobbying during the morning. I am, myself, opposed to the General Reserve, as I do not think it will serve any useful purpose, and I am quite satisfied to allow the two Commanders-in-Chief to fight their own battles in unison. We at Versailles can help them by giving decisions if they both get into trouble. Meanwhile, it is better to let them carry on as they are."

"*March 4.*—We had a meeting of the Executive Board at 3 p.m., with Foch in the chair, to consider D.H.'s reply to the General Reserve letter of February 6. This was practically a refusal to earmark any divisions for the reserve, and the Board was rather nonplussed, for without the General Reserve the Executive Board do not come into being. They therefore decided that the only thing to do was to send a resolution to the Supreme War Council stating what they had done during the last month towards organizing a General Reserve. One cannot object to this. I went off at 6 p.m. to see Clemenceau and tell him what had taken place. He said he was quite glad, though he knew that Foch would be annoyed. He said he was better pleased with two generals conducting operations than four. Anyway, he in no way resented the result of our meeting."

Captain Peter Wright, in his "At the Supreme War Council," bases a charge of conspiracy by Sir Douglas Haig against Foch, on the fact that the reply to the letter of the Military Representative of February 6, by the British Commander-in-Chief, was not received at Versailles until March 3. Sir Henry Rawlinson here tells us that he did not send the letter until February 28. The omission was probably due to the fact that Sir Henry Wilson was called

to London in the crisis which arose when Sir William Robertson disagreed with his Government on the creation of the Executive War Board. In fact, the reply was sent from our General Head-quarters as quickly as possible, and long before it was dispatched, Sir Douglas Haig was at pains to make his views known to everyone who was entitled to have them. The immediate effect of the reply from the British Commander-in-Chief was that a meeting of the Executive War Board was called for March 14, in London. Before leaving for England, Rawlinson had an interview with Clemenceau on March 11.

"I paid Clemenceau a visit at 6.30 p.m. He was in very good form, but was annoyed at having to go over to England. He does not at all want to intervene in the discussion about Versailles, but I told him he would have to, whether he liked it or not; for the failure to create the General Reserve had brought about an impasse which must be settled one way or another. I told him that I did not see the need of giving executive powers to the War Board, and that the Military Representatives could function quite well without executive authority, if he replaced Weygand by some senior French Army commander. He said he could not spare Fayolles, whom Pétain had specially asked should be recalled from Italy. He seemed rather bored with the whole question, saying that he was quite innocent in regard to the creation of the War Board, which had been carried through entirely by Lloyd George, and he did not see why the innocent should suffer with the guilty."

"*March 14.*—At 11.30, the Supreme War Council met with Lloyd George in the chair, and all the other members present, including Clemenceau, Orlando, and D.H. It was most intensely interesting. D.H. won the day regarding the General Reserve, and we finally decided that the French and British divisions in Italy would form the nucleus of that Reserve, to be added to as American troops came out to relieve British divisions in the line."

This decision necessitated a trip to Italy for Rawlinson and some of his colleagues, and from this he returned just in time to receive the news of the great German attack on March 21.

"*March 25.*—This crisis of the battle continues, and the Boche to-day has been pressing on the northern and southern flanks rather than in the centre on the Somme. The Third Army, north of the Albert-Bapaume road, has had to give way somewhat under pressure, and is withdrawing to the line of the Ancre. To the south, the Germans are making strenuous efforts to get Noyon, but the French are holding on well to the ground north of that town. However, the general temperature of the battle is lower to-day than it was yesterday.

"The meeting which was to have taken place at Abbeville unfortunately fell through. Henry Wilson and D.H. went there, but only Weygand turned up, so H.W. came on here. Clemenceau and Milner went to Chantilly, where they met Pétain. H.W. and Milner both came back here for the night, and I had a chance of discussing matters in general with both of them. The situation is still very critical, and it is a race for Amiens between the troops we and the French can bring up against those which the Boche can push forward. He means to divide us, if he possibly can. H.W. proposes that Clemenceau should be generalissimo, with Foch as Chief of the Staff during the crisis, and I agree that this is the best solution, for D.H. and Pétain will, I think, accept it. It will be settled at the meeting which is to take place at Doullens to-morrow. D.H. also has a meeting of his Army commanders there."

"*March 26.*—I heard on the 'phone from H.W. that the question of unity of command was amicably and unanimously settled at Doullens to-day, and that Foch and D.H. shook each other warmly by both hands on parting. H.W. also told me that Gough is to be sent home, and I am to reconstruct the remnants of the Fifth Army as the Fourth Army. It will be a difficult job, but I shall be glad to have it, and there is no further need for the Executive Board, which never was a workable proposition. Our losses up to 6 p.m. to-night are 80,000, and this is what worries me most. We are short of men and of divisions. It is quite evident that the Boche means to get Amiens, and if he does he will cut the British Army off from the ports of Rouen and Havre, as well as separating us from the French Army.

We can manage with Boulogne and Calais at a pinch, Nash[1] says, but it will not be easy, and we may expect much trouble in the Channel from submarines, and raids by destroyers. It will then be open to the Germans to turn either on us, or on the French. Personally, I think he will turn on us and endeavour to drive us into the sea, I think he will turn then on the French, with Paris as his objective. Anyway, we shall have some ding-dong fighting, but, with our backs to the wall, we shall, I know, give a good account of ourselves. The Boche reserves are not unlimited."

On March 28 Rawlinson arrived at Dury to take over the defence of Amiens, and strenuous days left him little leisure for his diary. On March 30, he noted: "The Boche attacked all along the line this morning, and again in the afternoon. He penetrated in two places, but counter-attacks by the 2nd Cavalry Division and Seely's[2] Canadian Brigade re-established the line again. To-night we are relieving the "Old Guard,"[3] who have been in the line for five days and have just tided over the dangerous period, but the guns are not yet working very well with their barrage, and things are still rather upside down. However, we are beginning to get them into some sort of order.

"Clemenceau came to lunch, and also looked in on his

[1] Major-General Sir Philip Nash, then Inspector-General of Transportation.

[2] Major-General the Right Hon. J. Seely.

[3] "The Old Guard," later known as Carey's force, was formed as an emergency measure by General Gough on March 25. It consisted of seven companies of Royal Engineers of the Fifth Army; the 6th United States Engineers, 500 strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hodges of the United States Army; 3 detachments from the schools of the Fifth Army, and detachments from the IIIrd and XIXth Corps schools. The strength of the force was 2,200 men. The force was organized, and at first commanded, by General Grant, the Chief Engineer of the Fifth Army, but, as he was urgently needed for his proper duties, Major-General G. Carey took command on the afternoon of the 26th.

On March 27 the force was reinforced by 400 officers and men of the 2nd Canadian Railway Engineers. On March 29 and 30 the force was heavily attacked, but succeeded in the main in holding its ground. It was relieved on the evening of March 31 by the 18th Division, having fulfilled its task of gaining time for the reorganization of the defence of Amiens. The 6th United States Engineers were the first American troops to take part in battle on the Western front.

Mr. Lloyd George seems to have been under the curious misapprehension that Carey's force was composed of noncombatants, for, speaking in the House of Commons on May 9, 1918, he said: "Who are the combatants? Are those men who stopped the advance of the German Army to Amiens the other day combatants?" (Hon. Members—"Yes"). "They are not, if you begin to make a distinction between combatants and noncombatants—I am speaking of General Carey's force—they would not be treated as combatants." Hansard, Vol. 105, p. 2351.

way back from Boves, where I had sent him to see something of the battle. As he was bidding me good-bye, I said: 'Eh bien, M. le Président, je ferai mon possible,' 'Non, mon Général,' he answered, 'il faut faire l'impossible.' 'Eh bien, M. le Président, je le ferai,' and the old man went away quite happy. D.H. also came in, and I gave him the situation, which is not a very pleasant one. However, the 3rd Cavalry Division have arrived, and will be a great help if the Boche attacks to-morrow."

At the beginning of April there was a pause in the battle for Amiens, and on the 3rd, Rawlinson was able to write to Sir H. Wilson:

"This forty-eight hours' respite has enabled us to get some sort of order out of chaos, and also to carry out the relief of the French between Moreuil and Hangard without mishap. The situation as regards my troops has much improved. They have had a little rest, and are all the better for it. The 2nd Cavalry Division and Seely's brigade have done exceedingly well. Seely has on two occasions commanded a mixed force in two counter-attacks. He handled his men with great skill and determination, and brought off a considerable and most valuable success on both occasions. I complimented him personally to-day. But his Canadians have had heavy losses. They have lost 600 men out of about 1,400, and the 2nd Cavalry Division also suffered a good deal in their fine attack of April 1, but they had very few killed, nearly all wounded, most of whom will come back before long. I went round the division this morning, and found them in excellent spirits, and delighted at having at last been put into a fight. I also saw Seely's Canadian brigade this evening, they are in first-class form, in spite of their losses, and are quite prepared to go into the fight again to-morrow. This evening the Boche has been busy with his artillery at Moreuil, where I think he means to do a push to-night in accordance with a wireless message of his which we intercepted. The French will hold him all right, as they have two good divisions in there. No doubt the Germans would like to push us here, to gain possession of Amiens; but it is right at the point of the immense salient they have made by their attack, and the

farther west they push the more vulnerable do their flanks become. Looking at their dispositions, it seems to me more likely that they will make their next attack in the Arras-Loos area, with the object of getting the coal-fields."

On April 4 the Germans made their last big effort in the battle, and reached the eastern edge of Villers-Bretonneux, but were there checked. By April 5 the greater part of his old staff had rejoined Rawlinson, and his command had been definitely reconstructed as the Fourth Army. On that day he moved his head-quarters to Flixecourt, and wrote: "I feel happier about the general situation, and I have now three brigades of Australians in reserve, so I think we shall be able to keep the Boche out of Amiens. I am to take over the Australian Corps on the 8th, with a front up to Albert. Hurrah!"

This note of jubilation was due to his return to British command. In the crisis of March, the French, who, by Haig's agreement with Pétain were responsible for reinforcing the British right in the event of a successful German attack, had taken over control as far north as the Somme, and the British troops protecting Amiens were under French orders. Rawlinson had never felt comfortable in this situation, and rejoiced when a new arrangement brought him once more under Haig's command. There followed a period of comparative rest on the Fourth Army front. As Rawlinson had predicted, the Germans, finding it difficult to extend their salient towards Amiens, turned their attention farther north, though more to the north than he had anticipated, and on April 9 broke through the Portuguese front on the Lys. This shifting of the battle front gave him leisure to reorganize his defences, to rest his troops, and to turn his mind to events at home, about which he was anxious, having heard reports of an impending attack on Haig. He wrote to Lord Derby:

"I hear rumours that it is intended to hold an inquiry on the subject of the hostile attack on March 21, and our subsequent withdrawal. Such a procedure at the present would be a great mistake, for it would do an infinity of harm to the army and could do no possible good. Remember that the campaign of 1918 is only just beginning,

and we have got to go on fighting all through this summer with the help of the French and the Americans. What can possibly be hoped for from an inquiry? The reasons for our being pushed back to our present line are perfectly clear to me. They are not due to mishandling of armies, corps and regiments, which did their best to get out of a most difficult and critical situation, though certain minor mistakes may have been made—they always are. No; the real reasons for the success which the enemy gained are: (1) the British Army being forced to take over too long a front from the French, and our line being thus weakened; (2) The reduction of the strength of divisions from twelve battalions to nine, and the failure to keep the units up to strength; (3) The maintenance of many white troops in Salonika, Palestine, etc., that would have saved the situation in France. These are the real reasons for the failure. You may have an inquiry to put the blame on certain individuals like Gough and D.H., but that would do no good, and would, in my view, not be just. It would not improve the fighting efficiency of the army, which is the chief thing on which the safety of the Empire depends. No; I hope there will be no inquiry until after the war, and that the Government will do all they can to support D.H. If they do not, they will lose the war."

While watching events in the North, Rawlinson was anticipating another attack on his own front. The arrival of the Australian Corps had made him feel more comfortable, but most of the remainder of his troops had not yet recovered from the effects of the March battles, and he could not yet feel confident that Amiens was secure. He had the first sight of the Australian Corps as a whole on April 14. "I went round the divisions of the Australian Corps to-day, and found them in excellent heart. They are a splendid body of men, and Hobbs[1] and Monash[2] are both very good commanders. They are ready for any emergency, which is comforting; for Butler's IIIrd Corps, which has recently been reinforced, has had little or no chance of training its drafts, and is short of officers. It looks to

[1] Major-General Sir J. Talbot-Hobbs, commanding the 5th Australian Division.
[2] Lieutenant-General Sir J. Monash, commanding the Australian Corps.

me as if the next attack would be made either between Arras and Montdidier, or between Villers-Bretonneux and Montdidier, possibly both. The latter I am most anxious about, as it is only about seven or eight kilometres from Amiens. The Germans must make a big effort to get hold of Amiens soon, and all indications point to an attack being imminent."

The attack came against Villers-Bretonneux on April 24: "Heavy fighting all day. After a three hours' bombardment, the Boche attacked the Villers-Bretonneux front with two fresh divisions. The 8th and 58th Divisions of the IIIrd Corps beat back their first lines, but an hour after, at 7.15 a.m., a second attack was made with German tanks, and it succeeded in driving back our line. By now the Germans were in possession of Villers-Bretonneux, and they began dribbling forward into Bois l'Abbé, but a gallant counter-attack by a battalion of the 8th Division drove them out of the wood, and re-established the line. The 8th and 58th Divisions have been fighting more or less continuously since March 21, and the reinforcements which they have received are mainly composed of young boys, who were under fire for the first time. I fear that the heavy bombardment which the Germans put on before the attack must have shaken these children a good deal, hence the success of their second effort. Between Villers-Bretonneux and Cachy there was a battle of tanks. The Boche had three heavy tanks and several of our old ones. We knocked out one of the big German tanks and beat off the others.[1] Then seven of our whippets got in amongst the German infantry, and did great execution. They claim four hundred killed at least. The result of the morning's fighting showed Villers-Bretonneux in the hands of the Boche, The 5th Australian Division still holding their line, and Hangard still held by the French.[2] I have been arranging all day for a counter-attack, but have found it impossible to get the French to co-operate. Now, at 10 p.m., we are attacking on both sides of Villers-Bretonneux so as to surround

[1] This was the first tank duel of the war. Of our tanks, two female and one male engaged the three heavy tanks of the Germans. The two females were quickly knocked out, but the male tank, commanded by Lieutenant Mitchell, engaged and knocked out the leading German heavy tank, whereupon the other two turned tail.

[2] This was not correct, the French had lost Hangard.

it and re-establish the line. Two brigades of Australians and one of the 58th Division[1] are doing the attack, which is now in progress."

"*April 25.*—The counter-attack last night succeeded beyond my expectations. We have, by dusk this evening, recaptured the whole of Villers-Bretonneux and 600 odd prisoners unwounded, and the sweep-up will make it 700 or 800.[2] The 15th and 13th Australian Brigades did brilliantly; especially the former, attacking round the north of the village. They succeeded in doing their job with remarkably few casualties. The 13th Brigade suffered more, but our total casualties in the battle are not over 2,000. The counter-attack was very well imagined by Butler, and exceedingly well carried out by the Australians."

This was the last attempt of the Germans to attack in the direction of Amiens, and the weeks passed in anxious speculation as to where their next blow would fall. No attack came, and the respite gave time both for the construction of adequate defences and the assimilation of the reinforcements which were pouring into the British army. Rawlinson began to turn his mind to attack.

"*May 12.*—Foch is of opinion that the Boche is in difficulties. I will not go so far as that, but I say he may be. If he does not put in his offensive in the next fortnight or ten days, it will be clear that he is in trouble, but, so far, there is nothing definite to show that this is so. If nothing happens in the next fortnight, Foch says he will have a go at him in the Montdidier area. If he does, I could do an attack at Morlincourt, provided Haig thinks we can afford the casualties. I am planning a small attack to capture Ville-sur-Ancre, and a larger one to take Morlincourt."

The smaller attack took place on May 19, and that night Rawlinson wrote to Sir H. Wilson:

"My Australians did a very good operation at Ville-sur-Ancre to-day. They surrounded and rushed the village after a bombardment, captured 18 officers and 352 other ranks, as well as 20 machine-guns, and only suffered about

[1] The attack was, in fact, made by the two Australian brigades and the 54th Brigade of the 18th Division, with one battalion of the 58th Division attached.

[2] The total came to over 900.

200 casualties. The Boche did a curious thing to-day. He sent two aeroplanes over Abbeville at a height of about 20,000 feet. One of them made a vertical nose-dive, emitting volumes of black smoke which remained as a column in the air. They then went north, and did the same thing at Doullens and St. Pol. We think it was done to give the line of fire to one of his long-range guns, such as he uses to bombard Paris. I can't think of any other reason for it. I went over yesterday to see the two American divisions, the 35th and 82nd National Guard Divisions, which have just arrived and are training with our 30th and 66th Divisions in my back area. They are desperately keen, and I fancy we shall want every man-jack of them before the summer is past."

It was General Smythe's 2nd Australian Division which captured Ville-sur-Ancre; and this, if it was but a small affair, was the first attack we had originated since March 21, and was therefore a pleasant indication of recovery from the bad days of the spring. Rawlinson was delighted with his Australians:—"They are certainly original fighters, and up to all sorts of dodges, some of which would shock a strict disciplinarian. I hear that during the battle of Villers-Bretonneux the village of Corbie was being shelled by 5·9's. Some of the German shells were falling short into the pools of the Somme river, and exploded under water. Two Australians spent the day in a boat, rowing about and watching for a shell to explode and then picked up the stunned fish. They wore their gas masks to prevent recognition! The other day Budworth gave a lift to a lieutenant of the Australian Corps, who told him that the Anzacs were quite at the top of their form. When Budworth asked him how he knew this, he replied:—'You see, when the men mean business they shout to me, "Joey, what ought we to do next?"'

"Some of them are pretty tough customers. A party of them went off on their own the other day, got themselves photographed, and sent the photo as a post-card to the Provost-Marshal at Havre, with the following inscription: 'With all respect we send you this P.C. as a souvenir, trusting that you will keep it as a mark of esteem from those who know you well. At the same time trusting that

nous jamais vous regardez encore.' Five of them were recognized as having done a term in the Havre prison."

On May 27 the Germans made their great attack on the Aisne front which brought them once more to the Marne; and on June 9 they began the battle of Lassigny, with the object of getting to Compiègne, in which they were foiled; but though Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria in the north still had formidable reserves and kept the British front under the menace of attack, none came. Rawlinson, therefore, always on the look out for an opportunity of striking a blow, planned another enterprise. He had received a number of Mark V tanks—"a very different proposition from those we have yet had, far more reliable in every way"—and to these he proposed to give a preliminary canter.

"*June 18.*—I went round the Australian Corps to-day, and proposed to Monash and MacClagan[1] an attack with two battalions of tanks against Hamel village and spur to improve our position north of Villers-Bretonneux. MacClagan is not overjoyed at the prospect of tanks, but we will get him round when he has had experience of the new type."

"*June 30.*—I attended another demonstration with the tanks at Vaux, which went very well. General Bell, commanding the 33rd American Division, was present. I think we have now got the Australians to understand and appreciate the tanks. Monash held a final conference of 4 hours and 20 minutes this afternoon, at which every detail was discussed and settled.

"H.W. came to lunch this afternoon, and I thought him in the very best of form and looking far better than I have seen him for ages. He says the Italian morale has increased beyond belief since last November. The Austrians are in a bad way, and it is possible that the Germans will send 15 divisions down there to make another attack on the Italians, instead of an offensive here on the Western front. He says that if this German movement has already begun we shall not be able to send help to the Italians in time.

"They have no idea what the Germans mean to do next, and there is as yet no indication of where his next effort

[1] Major-General Sinclair MacClagan, commanding 4th Australian Division.

will be made. Du Cane[1] is doing excellent work with Foch. He writes very lucid memoranda, which Foch and Weygand read and discuss. As to the future, Henry says that when the Western front is safe, which it will be when the Americans are here in force and the winter mud begins, he will reinforce Allenby in Palestine and Marshall in Mesopotamia.

"The campaign of 1919 will be for the British in the East, and he is very anxious to get the Japanese into Siberia. At present, President Wilson objects. Henry is looking at all the fronts, and wants to hold as many cards as possible when the time comes for discussing peace terms. He hopes to have Palestine, Mesopotamia, Persia, perhaps Asia Minor, and a good chunk of Central and Eastern Africa, with all the coaling stations, in our hands by 1920, when the Boche will be thoroughly exhausted and we shall be able to impose on him a British peace. That is a very pretty programme, but can we last till 1920? As far as I can learn, our man-power prospects for 1919 are pretty poor, and meanwhile we have to deal with the Germans in 1918."

The attack on Hamel took place on July 4, and of it Rawlinson wrote to Colonel Clive Wigram:—"I have another quite useful success by the Australians to record. It took place on July 4, north-west of Villers-Bretonneux, and was designed to improve our position, as well as to give the Boche a knock.

"I selected the date of Independence Day, as it was the first occasion on which American troops had taken part in an actual attack alongside our own fellows;[2] and I was not a little put out when, at the very last moment, I got a direct order from Pershing that no American troops were to be employed. It was then too late to withdraw them, so I am afraid I had to disobey the order. All went well and the Americans did not have many casualties; but if things had gone wrong I suppose I should have been sent home in disgrace. The American troops conducted themselves admirably, fought like tigers, and have won the undying

[1] General du Cane was now the Senior British Military Representative on Foch's staff.

[2] Four companies of the 33rd American Division took part in the attack.

admiration and affection of the Australians, who were heard to remark, 'We are damned glad they are on our side.'

"I introduced several novelties into the attack. The Australians had no confidence in the tanks after their experience at Bullecourt,[1] where the tanks went wrong and did not turn up in time, and ended by shooting at them; so, when I proposed using tanks this time, the suggestion was not welcomed. However, I made them do it. We practised with the tanks daily, and showed the Anzacs what they could do, and how to use them. Then, on the day, the tanks went forward with the leading wave of infantry under the barrage, and did first class. They all arrived to time on the starting line; went over the top with the infantry; crushed many machine-gun nests, hunted the Boche out of Hamel village and Vaire Wood; and finally returned in triumph, carrying the cheering wounded on their backs. Now the Australians can't say enough in praise of tanks.

"We also used the supply tanks, which will carry ten tons. They were most useful in carrying forward pickets and wire for consolidating the new position.

"There is always difficulty in getting ammunition forward to the fighting line, so this time we tried dropping it from aeroplanes with a parachute. It answered admirably, and we dropped over 100,000 rounds to infantry and machine-guns in our forward positions.

"The attack took place at 3.10 a.m., just as it was getting light enough to see to shoot. In order to prevent the noise of the tanks being heard by the enemy, we kept aeroplanes flying over his lines for two hours before dawn, so as to drown the noise, and by so doing we completely surprised him. The attack went forward without much difficulty till it reached Hamel village and Vaire Wood. At both places the Boche put up a good fight; but the tanks and the Australians were too much for him, and we reached our farthermost objectives within two hours after starting. The artillery did very well in their counter-battery work, with the result that the attackers were not troubled by the hostile barrage. Up to the moment of zero no increase of artillery fire was permitted, so that

[1] April 11, 1917

when our barrage came down it fell like a wall of fire and smoke, and was quite unexpected by the Boche.

"I am rather surprised that he has not made more attempts at doing a counter-attack. He has taken the defeat lying down, which shows pretty clearly that he will not be drawn, and that the big attack is not far distant."

This action of Hamel, in itself inconsiderable when compared with the great battles of the war, marked a turning-point in the history of the Fourth Army and of the tanks. It showed that the enemy's power of resistance was lower than it had ever been, that his defences were not formidable, and it established general confidence in the new machines and new methods. Rawlinson and his staff at once turned their minds to working out the preparation for an attack with similar methods on a much larger scale. But the final German effort was still to come and, until it was made, nothing definite could be proposed. Not many days after Sir H. Wilson's visit to Rawlinson, the fog of war began to lift, and it grew more and more certain that the Germans were preparing an attack in Champagne. It came on either side of Rheims on July 15. The attack to the east of Rheims failed completely; that on the west made but moderate progress. The Germans had shot their bolt.

"*July 18.*—The news from Champagne continues to be satisfactory, and the German wireless is inclined to belittle the importance of the attack, which is suspicious. Foch thinks the German have lost heavily east of Rheims—where the French got from prisoners the exact time of the commencement of the attack, and put in a heavy bombardment and much mustard gas as the attacking troops were assembling. On this part of the battle front the Germans have nowhere penetrated the French main positions. They have, however, crossed the Marne east of Château-Thierry, but the French are organizing a big counter-attack.

"I lunched with D.H., and proposed to him an offensive east of Villers-Bretonneux, if he would give me the Canadians. To my surprise and delight, I find he has already decided to do this as soon as he could get Godley[1]

[1] General Sir A. Godley.

and his four divisions back from the French.[1] I gave him my proposed objectives, and proposed taking over from the French as far south as Moreuil, but this he was reluctant to agree to. He seemed to think the Germans would not, or could not, continue fighting during the winter, and that they would do their utmost to come to terms in the autumn, especially if they failed in Champagne, as now seems probable

"I hope I shall be able to bring off this offensive south of the Somme, for I really think that it will be a big thing. My only difficulty will be to get enough divisions and to keep the thing secret."

On July 18, Pétain delivered the counter-attack, which he had long had in readiness, against the German flank between the Aisne and the Marne; and, while the Germans were being driven back out of the great salient which they had created in July, Rawlinson was quietly making his preparations. For nearly four years, Rawlinson, like other commanders on the Western front, had been seeking how to solve the problem of the trench barrier. Bombardment and assault had been tried at Neuve Chapelle; gas and assault at Loos; a long-drawn-out succession of attacks had been made on the Somme and at Passchendaele; the "bite and hold" theory had been successful at Messines. Always there had been the difficulty of hiding prolonged preparations from the enemy; those for the Somme had taken months. The tank attack at Cambrai of the previous winter had shown that the long preliminary bombardment, which destroyed all chance of a surprise, was not an essential preliminary to attack; but the tank of 1916 and 1917 had defects.[2] Now the experience of Hamel had proved that

[1] These four divisions were, at Foch's request, sent to support the French at the time of the German attack on the Aisne in mid-July. The British Government, being afraid of attack on the British front, protested, but Haig took upon himself the entire responsibility of supporting Foch. On July 12, Foch had written to Haig proposing that the first British offensive should be made in Flanders with the object of freeing the Bruay coalfield area near Béthune. To this Haig replied, on July 17, suggesting a combined British and French attack east and south-east of Amiens. Rawlinson had simultaneously and independently planned a similar attack, and Foch eventually agreed.

[2] Mr. Churchill, in his "World Crisis, 1916-1918," says of the employment of tanks in the battle of the Somme: "To achieve this miniature success and to carry the education of the professional mind one stage further forward, a secret of war which, well used, would have procured a world-shaking victory in 1917, had been recklessly revealed to the enemy." The reader will have gathered that Rawlinson

the new tank could be relied on to do most things that the enthusiasts were claiming for it. So, confident in his men, weapons and himself, Rawlinson looked forward to the battle which began the hundred days of triumphant advance of the British Army.

was not of this opinion. He would, in fact, never have dared to attempt with the tank of 1916 what he attempted with the tank of 1918; and it was the experience gained in 1916 which enabled the tank of 1918 to be produced. Nor is Mr. Churchill's opinion shared by any of the tank experts. Colonel Fuller, in his "Tanks in the Great War," p. 59, after reciting the lessons learned on the Somme, says: "These are the main lessons learnt from the tank operations which took place during the battles of the Somme and the Aisne, and the mere fact of having learnt them justifies the employment of tanks during these operations. Further, it must be remembered that, whatever tests are carried out under peace conditions, the only true test of efficiency *is* war, consequently the final test a machine or weapon should get is its first battle; and until this test has been undergone no guarantee can be given of its real worth and no certain deductions can be made as to its future improvement."

CHAPTER XI

THE HUNDRED DAYS

IT was an anxious and intricate business to marshal fourteen divisions of infantry, three divisions of cavalry, more than two thousand guns and some four hundred and fifty tanks, on a front of ten miles, without giving to the enemy an inkling of what was afoot. Surprise was of the essence of the contract, and any one of a hundred accidents might disclose the secret. How the secret was kept, how elaborate were the precautions taken to deceive both the enemy, our own troops and the good folk at home, has been admirably described elsewhere.[1] Not even to his own diary did Rawlinson confide any details of his scheme. When all was ready, on the evening of August 7, he wrote: "There is nothing to show that the Boche knows what is coming south of the Somme. We shall have eight excellent divisions and three hundred and fifty tanks against him on this part of the battle-front, in a perfect tank country; and three cavalry divisions ready to press through any hole that is made. I have great hopes that we shall win a great success."

The success was greater even than he had dared to expect, and on August 9 he was able to write: "We have had two splendid days. All three corps to-day have gained much ground, and the IIIrd Corps' attack this afternoon has won the Chipilly spur and part of the Bois des Tailles. The Canadians and Australians have done magnificent work. The IIIrd Corps did not do so well yesterday, which, I fancy, is still due to the effects of the March retreat, but their tails are up to-day.[2]

"The surprise on the 8th was complete. The Germans

[1] Montgomery. "The Story of the Fourth Army," Chap. ii.

[2] Neither the Australian nor the Canadian troops had been involved in the retreat in March.

had no idea that the Canadians were on my front, and believed them to be at Kemmel. The tanks were all up to time, and did splendidly, and some of our armoured cars got right through the German lines and surprised the head-quarters of a German corps at breakfast. This is a good reply to de Lisle's pyjamas.[1] The Air Force bombed the big 11-inch railway gun, with which the Boche had been bombarding Amiens, and enabled the Australians to capture it. With it there were four trucks of ammunition, so we are turning it round to bombard Péronne. I fancy the prisoners must be nearing 20,000 and the guns taken must number 300. We have practically eaten up seven Prussian divisions. After to-morrow we shall expect counter-attacks, but up to the present there have been practically none, and to-day there has been very little hostile artillery fire. While everyone did splendidly, I think the spirit of the Colonial infantry was probably the decisive factor. I am very proud to have commanded so magnificent an army in this historic battle. The result of this victory should have a far-reaching effect on the Boche morale."

In fact the battle of Amiens achieved far more than the relief of that town and the restoration of direct railway communication between the zone of the British army and Paris; more even than the lowering of the German morale which Rawlinson expected. It brought the German higher command face to face with the spectre of complete defeat. In a passage in his memoirs, which has often been quoted, Ludendorff says: "August 8th was the black day of the German Army in the history of the war . . . August 8th marked the decline of our fighting power, and, the man-power situation being what it was, it robbed us of the hope of discovering some strategic expedient that might once more stabilize the position in our favour . . . The war would have to be ended."[2]

On August 14, at Ludendorff's request, a Crown Council was held at the German Great Head-quarters, under the

[1] During the German counter-attack at Cambrai, in 1917, the Germans surprised the head-quarters of General de Lisle's division, and the general had to escape in his pyjamas. This got into the papers, and aroused some adverse comment at home. See p. 205.

[2] Ludendorff, "My War Memories, 1914–18," Vol. II, p. 679.

presidency of the Emperor, at which the former declared it was no longer possible to force the enemy to sue for peace by an offensive, and it was then agreed that diplomatic negotiations must be opened at the right moment.[1] The battle of Amiens was, therefore, not merely a first step on the road to victory. It had made victory certain, the question now was what the extent of the victory would be. That this was so was not, naturally enough, yet appreciated in the ranks of the Allies; still less was it understood by the Government at home, which was still looking for victory with the help of a great American army in 1919. The immediate task was to make the most of what the Fourth Army had already achieved. While eager to exploit his success to the full, Rawlinson was keenly on the watch for such counter-attacks as had brought our initial success at Cambrai to naught, and for that stiffening of the German resistance which he had always maintained put a term to the advantages to be derived from the later stages of an attack.

"*August 10.*—We have made further progress to-day, but the hostile resistance is stiffening. It is on the 3rd and 4th days of a battle that resistance begins to harden, and then is the time to extend the battle-front, and to put in new attacks by armies on the flanks. I met D.H. at Currie's[2] head-quarters. Foch has told D.H. to push forward to the Somme, and establish bridge-heads on the other side of Péronne and elsewhere. This I shall endeavour to do, but the old Somme battlefield is difficult ground to get over."

"*August 11.*—I have stopped the attack, and told the corps to rest and reorganize. We shall renew the attack on the 15th, deliberately, with as many tanks as we can collect. The country over which we shall be working is seamed with old trenches which will be full of machine-gun nests, so I fear we shall have a high casualty list."

"*August 13.*—I met the King at Molliens-au-Bois to-day, where he saw the 33rd American Division, looking very well. Pershing and Bliss were both present. The King took them into a private room and decorated them both with the G.C.B. He told me afterwards that he had

[1] Ludendorff, "My War Memories, 1914–18," Vol. II., p. 686, *et seq.*
[2] Lieutenant-General Sir A. Currie, commanding the Canadian Corps.

urged on Pershing the advisability of having a certain number of American divisions permanently with the British army. Bliss told me he thought Pershing would agree. I hope so I had to leave the King to have his lunch on a hill overlooking the Somme valley, while I went to a conference at Villers-Bretonneux. I met him there again after the conference, and took him to Amiens, where he saw the destruction and visited the cathedral. He then went on to knight Monash, and see the Australians. I had to come back to meet D.H. at 3.30. I think he is going to persuade Foch to give up the push across the Somme. At 4 the King arrived, followed by Foch, Pétain, Fayolles and Debeney, had them all photographed, and gave them tea. Foch was very complimentary about the doings of the Fourth Army."

"*August 14.*—I went over to D.H. at 10 a.m., with maps and photographs of the objectives for the attack which had been arranged for to-morrow. I pointed out to him that we were up against a regular trench system with masses of uncut wire, and I considered that to take it on with our present resources in guns and tanks would be to risk heavy losses and possible failure. I suggested that it would be far better and cheaper to hold the enemy to his ground, on my front, by wire-cutting and bombardment until the Third Army is ready to put in a surprise attack, and then to press on simultaneously with that attack. This he entirely agreed with, and I left him the maps and photographs to show to Foch. At 3 p.m. I held a conference with the Australian and Canadian corps, and told them of the change of plan. I think they were relieved. I then visited the Australian and Canadian divisions, and heard many interesting stories of the battle. One extraordinary feat of an Australian officer, named Gaby, was told me. On the 8th, his company was held up by a German strong point. He crawled forward through the wire, jumped on to the parapet, and alone with his revolver compelled fifty Germans with four machine-guns to surrender. Alas, he was killed on the 11th; we must get a posthumous V.C. for him.[1] Everyone is overjoyed at the victory—21,132 prisoners, 400

[1] A posthumous V.C. was awarded to Lieutenant A. E. Gaby, 28th Australian Infantry. *See* "The Story of the Fourth Army," p. 286.

GEN. WEYGAND LORD STAMFORDHAM MAJ.-GEN. BUDWORTH MAJ.-GEN. MONTGOMERY
LT.-GEN. SIR H. LAWRENCE MAJ.-GEN. HOLMAN MAJ.-GEN. BUCKLAND LORD CROMER
GEN. SIR H. RAWLINSON GEN. DEBENEY MARSHAL FOCH H.M. THE KING FIELD-MARSHAL SIR D. HAIG MARSHAL PETAIN GEN. FAYOLLE

THE KING'S VISIT TO FOURTH ARMY HEAD-QUARTERS, AUGUST 13, 1918

guns, nearly 2,000 machine-guns and mortars, and our total casualties 20,400."

On the afternooon of the 14th, Sir Douglas Haig succeeded in inducing Foch to give up the idea of pressing forward with the Fourth Army across the Somme, and got him to agree to the alternative plan of extending the battle northwards with Byng's Third Army, which was to begin on the 21st. So the Fourth Army had a few days of comparative rest.

"*August 18.*—Things have been fairly quiet on my front, but the French have been pressing on and are close up to Roye station. I lunched with D.H. in Amiens, to meet Clemenceau and Foch. The old Tiger was most amusing, and told us how Foch, on March 26 at Doullens, had lectured the politicians and shown them that there was no need to despair. At the lunch, when we were having our coffee, the Tiger made a charming little speech and decorated D.H. with the Médaille Militaire, which he said was the highest distinction the Republic could confer on a soldier. I took the Tiger and Foch to see the big German railway gun, and they asked to have it sent to Paris, which D.H. agreed to do."

While Byng's Third Army was fighting its way forward to Bapaume, the Fourth Army resumed a methodical advance towards Péronne, and, on August 29, Rawlinson wrote of his progress to Sir H. Wilson:—"Things are going very well and we have the Boche seriously rattled. The confusion in his ranks here is appalling; I have never seen it so bad since the early days of the Somme battle. He has very few reserves at his disposal and does not know where to throw them in on the very wide front on which we are pressing him. Prisoners taken at Guillemont say that some of his troops did a bolt last night back to Péronne, where they were rallied and sent back to the line again. The 2nd Guards Division, which was a good one from reserve, was thrown in piecemeal two days ago on a front of 10,000 yards, from Trones Wood to Faucaucourt. I was amused at the story of a London boy of 20, of the 53rd Brigade[1] who, hearing that the front line was short of

[1] Of the 18th Division, which captured Trones Wood on August 21, 1918. This division had captured the same wood in the battle of the Somme of 1916.

ammunition, fell in 50 prisoners of the 2nd Guards Division (the Kaiser Franz Joseph's Regiment of Grenadiers) and made each of them pick up a box of ammunition and carry it in front of him to the front line. So do the London boys treat the pick of the German Guard regiments. These great hefty Prussians obeyed the boy like lambs. The position now is very favourable. We are up to the Somme, and shall soon drive back the enemy at least to the Hindenburg Line, if not beyond it. All you have got to do is to keep our infantry up to strength and not waste man-power in tanks and aviation. They won't win the war for you as the infantry will. We cannot beat the Boche without infantry. Tanks, aeroplanes, etc., are great helps, but they cannot and will not win the war for us by themselves, so do not let Lloyd George think they will, and persist in developing them at the expense of the infantry.

"The Boche is fighting badly now. The Turk, the Bulgar, and all the others, will feed out of your hand once you have licked the Boche out of France, and we can do it if only you will keep our divisions up to strength."

In this confident mood the advance continued. As Rawlinson here says, his troops had reached the Somme, but the problem of getting over the river was no easy one. The crossings near Péronne, and Péronne itself, were dominated by Mont St. Quentin, a commanding hill covered with a network of trenches, before each line of which lay a heavy belt of barbed wire. On the night of August 30, Rawlinson wrote:—"The 2nd and 3rd Australian Divisions are determined to get hold of Mont St. Quentin and Péronne. If they can do it quickly I shall be delighted, but I doubt the Boche giving up so important a position without a stiff fight."

All doubts were resolved before breakfast the next morning.

"*August 31.*—As I was dressing this morning, Archie rang me up to say that the Australians had captured Mont St. Quentin. It is indeed a magnificent performance, and no praise is too high for them. I must send them a tele-

gram of congratulation.[1] During the day the Boche has put in fifteen counter-attacks, and I am not sure that he has not gained some ground, but we have three brigades over the river now, so that they ought to be able to hold on all right until the big attack on the whole of the front of this army and of the Third Army goes in to-morrow at dawn.

"This is a splendid end to a glorious month. Since August 8, the Fourth Army has captured 32,000 prisoners, 456 guns, and 3,100 machine-guns and trench-mortars. I am a proud man to have had the leading of such troops.

"Looking back now at August 8, the things that please me most are our success in keeping plans secret from our own troops without any bad effect on co-operation in the battle; the way in which we deceived everyone about the move of the Canadian divisions; and the reliability of the new tanks. If any one of these things had gone wrong we might have failed, and certainly we should not have won such a sweeping victory. Time and again in this war, great enterprises have failed because one side or the other took prisoners who knew that an attack was preparing. In 1917, the Boche took prisoners who had on them details of Nivelle's attack, and he was quite ready for the French blow when it fell. The other day, I hear, Gouraud took some Boche prisoners who told him the exact time and place of the attack east of Rheims. On August 6, the Boche attacked the IIIrd Corps south of Morlincourt and captured about 151 prisoners, none of whom knew anything about the preparation for the main attack south of the Somme, and the Boche got from them no information that was of any use to him.

"As to the move of the Canadians, G.H.Q., and Cox[2] in particular, played up splendidly. Rumours generally start in the casualty clearing stations, and when two Canadian stations were sent to the Second Army all the gossips were

[1] The telegram ran: "The capture of Mont St. Quentin by the 2nd Division is a feat of arms worthy of the highest praise. The natural strength of the position is immense, and the tactical value of it, in reference to Péronne and the whole system of the Somme defences, cannot be over-estimated. I am filled with admiration of the gallantry and surpassing daring of the 2nd Division in taking this important fortress, and I congratulate them with all my heart."

[2] The late Brigadier-General Cox, then head of the Intelligence Department at G.H.Q.

certain that the Canadians were for an attack on Kemmel. I hear that Canadian Head-quarters in London protested to G.H.Q. against the splitting up of the Canadian Corps, as being contrary to the agreement with the Canadian Government.

"The 3rd Canadian Division had the most difficult job of any, as they had to get across the River Luce; and I had always regarded the early capture of Rifle Wood and the high ground in its vicinity as essential to success. We had to get tanks across the river in the dark before zero, right under the nose of the Boche. There was a very serious risk that they might be discovered by the enemy and fired on by artillery; the danger being that if a tank were disabled at the crossing it would block the bridge and causeway, or a tank might break down at the critical time and place, as they had so often done before. However, all went well, and the Canadian attack went like clockwork. The precautions taken to drown the noise of the tanks by keeping a large number of aeroplanes in the air during the critical hours answered its purpose admirably. We have shown that even in trench warfare it is possible to mystify and mislead the enemy."

In the early days of September, the Germans were retreating slowly on the whole front of the Fourth, Third and First British Armies, and the question in everyone's mouth was should we rush them through the Hindenburg Line.

"*September 5.*—We have made good progress and gained all the passages over the Somme. All the villages on our front are on fire; the Boche is in full retreat to the Hindenburg Line. I went to advanced G.H.Q. to-day to ask for another corps to put in south of the Australians, and I am to get the IXth Corps with Braithwaite in command.[1] Now I am preparing to go for the Hindenburg Line. Lawrence told me the Chief wanted to make a big thing of it, and that I am to attack the Bellicourt Tunnel. I know it well and am making schemes for the attack already.

[1] Rawlinson was in need of reinforcements because, after the battle of Amiens, Haig transferred the Canadian Corps secretly from Rawlinson's to Horne's army. On September 2, this corps broke through the Drocourt-Quéant switch of the Hindenburg Line, S.E. of Arras.

THE KING INSPECTING THE 4TH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

Imperial War Museum Photograph. Crown Copyright.

He says he may be able to give me an American corps. If so, I shall feel pretty confident. It will be a hard nut, but with the Boche in his present state we ought to be able to do it all right."

"*September 7.*—I have been round all the corps and divisions to-day, and did not get back till 7.45 p.m. I found them all in great spirits, and saying they would take the Hindenburg Line with the advanced guard. I only wish it were possible; we shall have some tough fighting for it with all we have got. I told the corps commanders that no attacks were to be made with forces exceeding a brigade without reference to me, as D.H. is very insistent on husbanding our resources. Personally, I wish we could push ahead as hard as possible, as I fear that, if we give the Boche time to rally, he may hold us on the Hindenburg Line for the remainder of this year."[1]

The prelude to the attack on the Hindenburg Line by the Fourth Army was thus described by Rawlinson immediately after he had won his victory:—

"The main Hindenburg system consisted of three distinct lines of defence, roughly 3,000 to 5,000 yards apart. The main line ran generally along the Canal du Nord, which in most places had been made use of as an obstacle in front of the defences. There was an outpost line 4,000 yards in front of this, while the support or reserve line, known as the Beaurevoir system, was about 5,000 yards in rear of the canal. All three of these lines had been constructed in 1917, and were well furnished with elaborate trenches, with deep dug-outs built of concrete, and were protected with at least three, and in some cases with six, lines of well-constructed wire entanglements.

"In front of the outpost line was our old front line of 1917, which the Germans had turned into quite a strong position. On September 10, the Chief asked me officially if I thought I could make a successful attack on the main

[1] The reason for these instructions was that, on August 31, Sir Douglas Haig had received a telegram which the Government at home had caused to be sent to him, warning him against incurring heavy losses in an attack on the Hindenburg Line. The Government was still sceptical of the possibility of winning victory before 1919, and was considering its plans for that year. Later, on having reports from his Army commanders, Sir D. Haig decided to take the responsibility of ordering the attack on the Hindenburg Line.

Hindenburg Line between Bellicourt and Bony, where the canal passes through a tunnel 5,000 yards in length and 160 feet below the surface of the ground.

"I answered that I thought this might be done, but that I could not say definitely until we had driven the enemy from our old line and from his outpost line. I would then be in a better position to judge of the actual state of the German morale, and of our chances of success against the main system. I proposed to attack our old line on the 18th with the forces at my disposal; and I was told that if I decided to attack the tunnel I should have the 27th and 30th American Divisions, as well as a considerable reinforcement of heavy artillery.

"The attack on our old front line on the 18th was carried out by the IIIrd Australian and IXth Corps on a front of 8 divisions. It was fairly successful, and in the centre the Australians gained all their objectives cheaply, but on the IIIrd Corps' front, and on the right of the IXth Corps, progress was slow and heavy fighting took place. On the 20th, the IIIrd Corps pushed on with great determination, and on the 21st were already in the outpost line; but, before that, the results of the fighting on the 18th had clearly shown us that the Germans had not recovered their fighting power, nor had they been able to disentangle the confusion into which their retreat had thrown them. I therefore telephoned to G.H.Q. on the evening of the 18th that, in my opinion, the attack on the main Hindenburg Line was a feasible enterprise offering quite reasonable chances of success, and I said that, as a preliminary operation, I proposed to attack the outpost line on the 21st. This was agreed to, and on the 21st we gained all our objectives except on the left of the IIIrd Corps, where, though we took Gillemont Farm and the Knoll in the first instance, we were driven out of them by counter-attack. I was then ready to complete my plans for the attack on the main Hindenburg Line."

While this work was in progress he was encouraged by the news of victories in Palestine and Macedonia, and on September 21, wrote to Sir H. Wilson in cheery confidence:

"The news from Palestine and Salonika is simply

topping. I confess I did not expect complete success in both theatres. Ferdinand must be feeling a bit of an ass, and Enver too. Meantime, the Boche is going to get the biggest knock he has ever had during the next ten days. I shall be surprised if by October 4 we have not won the biggest victory of the war. We are going to attack him with nearly 100 good divisions, and he has only some 70 tired and exhausted ones in reserve to put up against us, so I feel pretty confident that we shall be able to thrust him back to the Hirson Line[1] before the end of the year. Will this finish the war? I doubt it. I think we shall have to cross the German frontier before we get our full terms.

"Since the 18th we have had some pretty stiff fighting. The Boche is very tenacious of the outpost line in the Gillemont Farm area, which overlooks the northern part of the defences of the tunnel, and we are not yet in possession of this part of the outpost line. But we have gained all the rest of the starting places and shall get Gillemont within the next few days. Despite the hard fighting, we have captured 9,000 prisoners, and our casualties amount to 10,000, so that we are still inflicting a good deal more loss than we are incurring. The Yanks are in first-class form."

The next day, Rawlinson received from G.H.Q. the particulars of Foch's plan for a great combined effort to be made between the Meuse and the Yser. Thus, even to an Army commander, the full scheme was not disclosed until the very eve of the event. On September 26, Franco-American forces were to attack between the Meuse and Rheims, in the general direction of Sédan and Mézières. On September 27, the First and Third British Armies were to attack on the Cambrai front, aiming at Valenciennes and Maubeuge. On September 28, the Second British Army, the Belgian army, and the French forces in Flanders, were to attack on the Ypres front towards Ghent. Finally, on September 29, to the Fourth British Army, with the First French Army on its right, was to fall the honour of bursting through

[1] The Hirson Line was, roughly, that reached by us on November 11. Rawlinson foresaw that transport difficulties would prevent us from getting much beyond that line in 1918, if he did not foresee the full extent of the German collapse.

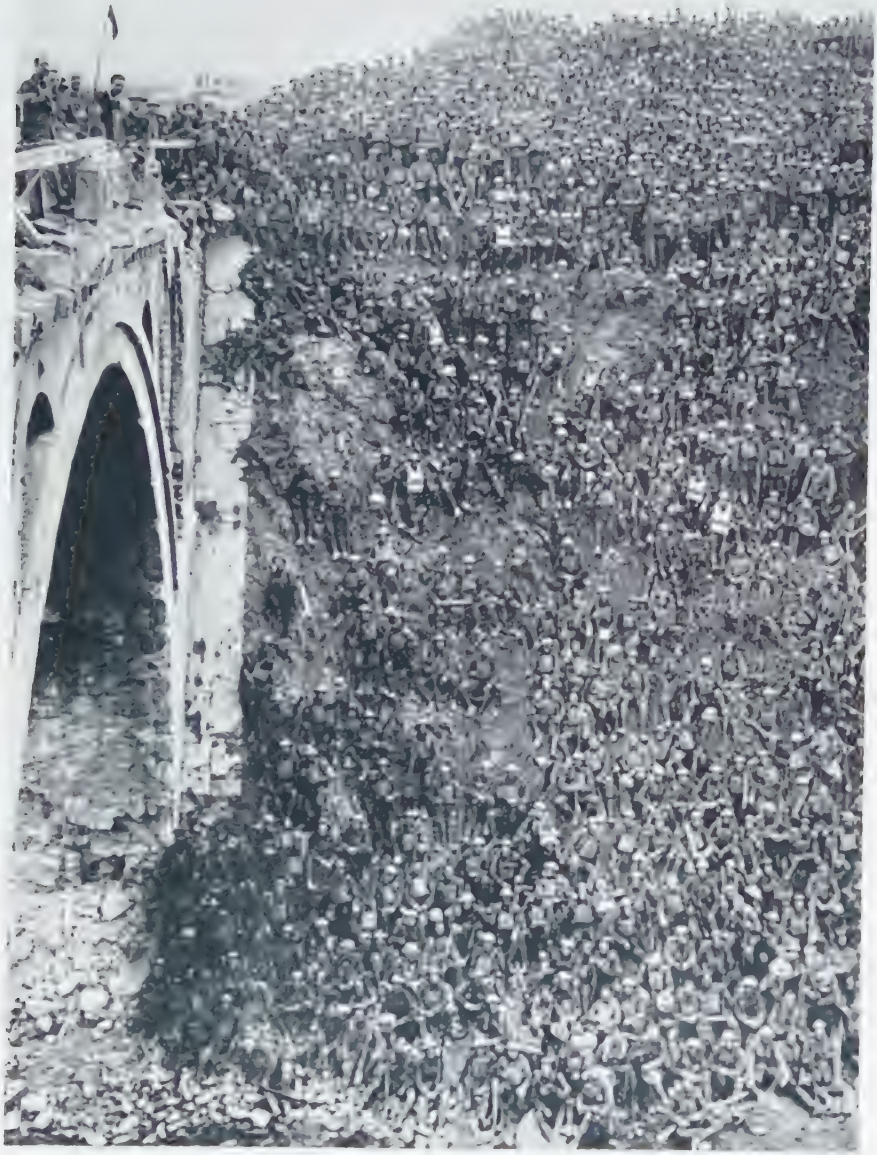
the centre of the Hindenburg Line, which done, they were to advance on Hirson and Avesnes.

When all of these blows save his own had fallen on the Germans, Rawlinson wrote on the night of September 28:

"To-day has been a record in the way of Allied successes on the Western front. Under Foch's tuition and the lessons of over four years of war, we are really learning, and the synchronization of the various attacks has been admirable. All three that have as yet gone in have been very successful, and I am fully confident that mine, which starts at dawn to-morrow, will be no less victorious. With new troops like the Americans, one has, of course, anxious moments. For instance, to-day it was quite impossible to find out just where they were. Alarmist rumours came in from the front, and the evidence seemed to show that they were not on the Gillemont Farm line, where they should have been, but the airmen repeatedly reported that they were. It was just the same on the Somme. New troops never know just where they are. I had a short conference with Monash this morning, and decided to reinforce the 27th American Division with 20 extra tanks, and to start them off from our old line at 5.20 a.m., so as to give them time to catch up the barrage which begins on the Gillemont Farm line at 5.50 a.m. I think this will work all right, for the Americans have had no experience of following a barrage, but they will stick to the tanks. I feel pretty happy about the prospects as a whole, for, if the Americans are inexperienced, they are as keen as mustard and splendid men. I rode over to give a word of cheer to Read[1] on the eve of his first battle.

"D.H. came to see me. He is in great form, delighted with the way things have gone in the North, and with the First and Third Armies. He thinks we shall finish the war this year, and I hope he may be right, but it is no certainty. If we can drive the German armies out of France before November, there may be a good chance of it; but we must send troops to march through Germany and enter Berlin. Turkey and Bulgaria are done, and Austria is very near the end. I should like to see Clemenceau and Foch now, they must be proud men. The guns are thundering.

[1] General Read, commanding IInd American Corps.



PART OF THE 46TH DIVISION AFTER THE CROSSING OF THE ST. QUENTIN CANAL

Imperial War Museum photograph. Crown copyright.

I have 1,600 for the battle, and I go to bed feeling 30 years old."

"*October 5.*—To-day the 2nd Australian and the 25th Division broke through the Hindenburg reserve line, and my leading troops are out in the open, so my victory is won. It has been a magnificent achievement by the Fourth Army. Yesterday I took a walk over the Bellicourt tunnel and Bellenglise. The great Hindenburg Line is certainly strong. I was much interested in the tunnel and canal. The Germans were very ingenious in the way in which they converted the tunnel into a great sheltered barrack for reserves, and the number of carefully-screened exits from it which they have constructed. I was much struck by the depth of the canal cutting, which was considerably greater than I had imagined. The cover to machine-gun emplacements along it was placed so that it was difficult for our guns to get at them, and they enfiladed the canal completely. Braith[1] and his IXth Corps were the heroes of the day on the 29th. The performance of the 46th Division in crossing the canal was magnificent. I hear that they captured over 4,000 prisoners, and had under 800 casualties. My total casualties in breaking through the Hindenburg system are just about 15,000, and the prisoners come to 15,600, so I am keeping up my average of a prisoner for every casualty. Since August 8, the Fourth Army has captured 62,000 Germans. My heaviest losses in this battle have been in the American Corps. They were too keen to get on, as gallant new troops always are, and did not pay enough attention to mopping-up, with the result that the Germans came out of the dug-outs after they had passed, and cut them off. To-day I walked round Quennemont and Gillemont farms. It is quite clear why they held up the 27th American Division, and why the latter farm in particular was such a hard nut to crack. The Boche had to hold on to it to prevent us from commanding the canal defences, and had constructed a regular network of dug-outs communicating with each other underneath it. Had the Boche morale not shown marked signs of deterioration during the past month, I should never have contemplated attacking the Hindenburg

[1] Sir Walter Braithwaite.

Line. Had it been defended by the Germans of two years ago, it would certainly have been impregnable and, with my Fourth Army as it is now, I would gladly defend it against any number of German divisions. Our 48 hours' bombardment evidently had a great effect. Our guns succeeded in getting off 1,000,000 rounds, over 50,000 of which was heavy stuff. Just before the attack, we had a special preliminary bombardment of 30,000 rounds of mustard-gas shells, which surprised the Germans, as it was the first time we had used mustard gas, and they had not got their masks ready. In preparing the bombardment, we were greatly helped by the capture on August 8, at the head-quarters of the German 51st Corps, of the complete scheme of defence for the Hindenburg Line, with all the trenches and gun emplacements marked on it.

"I think it may be truly said that the attack of September 29, which finally broke the Hindenburg main line, was the culminating point of the great offensive on the Western front. It now remains to follow up our success. The great difficulty is going to be to get the heavy guns and railways forward quickly enough over the broken country. I am attacking again on the 8th."

"*October 8.*—We have had another very good day. I attacked on the whole front of the army at 5.10 this morning, and got all I had hoped for. The Americans, XIIIth and IXth Corps all did very well, and I have sent them all congratulatory telegrams. The 30th American Division went in like tigers, and I hear that they have captured 30 guns, and are frightfully pleased with themselves. We identified 17 different German divisions and 67 different battalions on our front to-day, which proves that the confusion in the enemy's ranks is as great as ever. Some prisoners surrendered to-day because they said they thought there was an armistice."

The state of the railways behind his front, and the prospect of an armistice were now amongst Rawlinson's chief preoccupations. He was fearful that the difficulties of our communications would retard our advance to an extent which would induce the Allied Governments to give the Germans too easy terms.

"*October 11.*—The Boche is evidently going to make a stand on the Selle River. We shall be up against an organized line, and shall have to get up our artillery to break through satisfactorily. I am not at all satisfied with the progress made by our railways, which are of vital importance. I will speak to the Chief to-morrow on the subject. Every hour's delay on the railways now means further delays when we want to go forward."

"*October 12.*—Late this evening comes news from G.H.Q. that the Germans have accepted President Wilson's fourteen points, and will clear out of all conquered territory. I wonder what that means. Will there be a cessation of hostilities?"

The next day he wrote to Sir H. Wilson: "The Boche is really squealing now, but I am not sure that he will not wriggle out of the hole we have got him into, unless we Allies, and especially the Americans and ourselves, keep a stiff upper lip. We must follow him up to the frontier with our armies, and only discuss terms of peace when we have the Allied troops in Germany. We can march there during the winter, via the Meuse valley in the north and Luxemburg in the south, but I don't think any considerable bodies can move through the Ardennes.

"In the Armistice we shall have to draw lines beyond which he must withdraw by certain dates; any of his troops that have not reached those lines to be liable to attack.

"We cannot get the railways repaired through the broken country on this part of the front before the end of October, but we should be able to begin marching forward in the first week of November. However, this may not apply to the whole front. Once we start, we ought to be able to keep up eight to ten miles a day, which would put us on the German frontier, provided our railways worked all right behind us, by November 20–25. I have my eye on Malmédy for the Fourth Army, with my head-quarters at Spa. When we get there you can talk to the Boche seriously. From that position you can dictate whatever terms of peace you like, and exact any penalties and guarantees, for you will be on the confines of Germany in force. I fancy you will have to march to the Rhine before you will

really bring down the German edifice, and it is right that Allied troops should enter Germany. Personally, I think representative detachments should continue the march and enter Berlin.

"All goes very well here. The Boche has brought up five new divisions on my front during the last two days, so I am making another deliberate attack on him in a few days' time. He is very anxious to prevent us from getting to the Valenciennes railway, which is only fourteen miles from Le Cateau, where I now am. If we succeed in cutting that before you agree to an armistice, I think a large part of his army may have to lay down its arms."

As Rawlinson had anticipated, the delays caused by the destruction of the railways and roads had given the Germans time to organize a defence behind the Selle. This had caused Ludendorff to change his mind. Whereas, on September 29, both he and Hindenburg had insisted on the need for an immediate armistice, now he demanded a stirring call to the German armies and people, and the dispatch of every available man to reinforce his troops in the West. In this mood he had gone to Berlin on October 16, and the next day had told the Cabinet Council that he regarded a break through "as possible, but not probable. If you ask me on my conscience, I can only answer that I do not expect it." He records that after the meeting of the Council, "I travelled back to Spa in confident mood," only to meet the news that his lines on the Selle had been broken.[1]

On the eve of his preparations for the attack, Rawlinson wrote to Colonel Wigram:

"For the last week we have been stuck up against Le Cateau and the valley of the Selle, which the Boche has fortified to some extent, and, what is more inconvenient, has dammed at many of the mills and bridges, causing inundations which limit the front on which attack is possible. However, I am having a go at his position to-morrow (17th), with some seven divisions in line, and I have no doubt that we shall penetrate, and give the enemy another nasty knock. I am attacking with Morland's XIIIth Corps, 50th and 66th Divisions, on the left; Read's American Corps,

[1] Ludendorff, "My War Memories," p. 753, *et seq.*

27th and 30th American Divisions, in the centre; and Braithwaite's IXth Corps, 6th and 1st Divisions, on the right. All are in good heart, and quite determined to reply to the Boche squeal for an armistice by hammering on his now partly demoralized army. In the line before my Fourth Army the enemy has brought up four new divisions in the last few days, and another is coming in to-night; but, with the exception of these, they are all very much reduced in strength by recent fighting, and none have had more than ten days' rest, and some only three days'. We have an immense preponderance in artillery. Most of the German guns are on roads, a sure indication that they are looking over their shoulders and intend to be off the moment things begin to look nasty, so I fear we shall not be able to catch very many. On my front the enemy has not been doing such systematic destruction of villages as he did in 1917. Railways, roads and sugar factories he has, of course, blown up and destroyed; but many of the villages we have recently captured have suffered only from the artillery bombardment, and some, when fighting has not been severe, are quite intact, and serve us as comfortable billets.[1]

"President Wilson's reply to the Boche is quite satisfactory. I think he was right to reply on his own, and not refer to the Supreme War Council, though I don't suppose L.G. or H.W. will agree with me. Anyhow, he was perfectly right not to have anything to do with an armistice; and I know that the terms Foch will ask for will be a shock for the Boche. He wants three bridge-heads over the Rhine—one for ourselves, one for the French, and one for the Americans—and he is perfectly justified in demanding this, if the beaten German army is to be allowed to retire peacefully to its native country. The Boche will not agree to this, so we shall not have an armistice at present."

[1] *Cf.* Ludendorff's statement to the Cabinet Council of October 17: "We have, in accordance with our duty, done everything to limit the destruction as far as is consistent with military needs. It would be absolutely inexcusable to leave houses undestroyed, for billets are of great help to the enemy. In Lille we left untouched the electric light installation, the water supply and the tramway line, but destroyed the telephones, telegraphs and railways. The worst damage was done by the English guns and airmen.

"The army is not responsible for isolated cases of brutality. I have done my best to stop any such abuses. I request that this be emphasized in the note to Wilson, for the army has a right to that."—"My War Memories," p. 755.

So, just at the time when Ludendorff was urging a policy of no surrender, and believed that he had carried the day, Rawlinson was expecting to have to fight on at least until winter called a halt. The forcing of the line of the Selle, which Ludendorff had told his Cabinet was unlikely, destroyed the last shred of confidence in him, and his resignation followed. Thenceforth, events moved rapidly to the climax.[1] Of the attack on the Selle, Rawlinson wrote on the evening of the 17th: "We have had a pretty heavy fight to-day, in forcing the passages of the Selle and capturing Le Cateau. The Boche fought hard, especially north and south of Le Cateau, where his 17th Reserve and 243rd Division put up a strong resistance. The XIIIth Corps had the hardest task, and the 50th Division, and particularly the South African brigade, did well. The Yankees and the IXth Corps had a rather easier time, though they too had some stiff fighting. Both got on well. We have captured some 4,500 prisoners and 30 guns, as well as several machine-guns. I think the casualties are about the same as the prisoners. I am very well satisfied with the day's work, and am going on again to-morrow, for I think the Boche is tired, and I know that he has no more reserves to bring up. The Belgians are in Ostend and Bruges, and we have occupied Lille. So all goes well."

The battle of the Selle was not over until the evening of October 19, by which time the Fourth Army had driven the enemy back 9,000 yards on a front of 7 miles, had captured 5,100 prisoners and 60 guns. On the 20th, Rawlinson summed up the results of his latest victory: "I think the Boche has definitely made up his mind to go back slowly to the Meuse. I have just heard that the Second Army has taken Pecq, on the Scheldt east of Roubaix, without much opposition. This looks well, for it threatens Roubaix. The Boche answer to Wilson is another squeal for an armistice, the result of our latest successes. The negotiations are like selling a horse. We have got to fix the reserve price. If it is too high, the Boche won't buy, and we shall

[1] In a German order captured during the battle, the following occurs: "The Higher Command states that the possibility of an armistice being brought about depends on the battle being brought to a standstill . . . The English must not cross the Selle."

have to go on fighting. If he continues to destroy all railways, as he has done, we shall not reach the German frontier before February. Even so, I would rather go on another three or four months than have an unsatisfactory peace. We have spent so much, that we must not haggle at the little bit extra to get all we want.

"I visited the 1st and 50th Divisions, and congratulated them on their fine performances. D.H. has sent a nice telegram to Read, congratulating him and his Americans on their achievement. I am glad, for it was well deserved. Despite their heavy casualties, which were due to inexperience, they are just as keen as ever."

On following up the German retreat from the Selle, the Fourth Army came up against the southern end of the Mormal Forest, and the Sambre and Oise Canal. Deliberate preparation was again required before the canal could be crossed, and it was decided that a combined attack by the First, Third and Fourth British Armies and the First French Army should be made on November 4. With his preparation for this final blow completed on November 3, Rawlinson wrote:

"Events are moving rapidly. Turkey and Austria are out of the war, and the Boche remains the only opponent of the Allies. Foch and the Americans are insisting on the occupation of a considerable area of German territory on the Rhine, and David Beatty demands the surrender of half the German battleships, and all the cruisers and submarines. In fact, the terms are tantamount to unconditional surrender. I doubt whether the Boche will accept them without demur and further fighting. At any rate, he evidently means to fight to-morrow. The canal is a big obstacle, and I shall be very pleased if we force all the passages."

"*November 4.*—We attacked all along the front at 5.45 a.m. this morning, in conjunction with the armies on our right and left. A moving mist helped us very much in forcing the passages of the Sambre Canal, which the 1st Division did in grand style. The 32nd Division had some difficulty at and north of Ors, where German cyclists and Jaegers put up a strong resistance, and there was heavy

fighting. But by grit and determination they too got across, and the IXth Corps were on, or beyond, all their objectives by dusk this evening. Braithwaite did a very difficult job very skilfully. The XIIIth Corps also got on well through the Mormal Forest, and they appear to have had no difficulty in keeping their direction. The 25th Division did first-rate work in capturing Landrécies. In fact, all divisions did splendidly, and I have sent them all congratulatory telegrams. The only thing that is bothering me is the continual explosion of delay-action mines on the railway. Six or seven went up to-day, well behind our front, and this has caused a serious block in the traffic, and supplies and ammunition are not coming forward as well as I could wish. However, the Fourth Army to-day has captured over 4,000 prisoners and 80 guns, and the Third Army on my left has had an even better bag, and got 6,000 prisoners and 150 guns. This will be a heavy blow to Berlin, and may well decide them to accept our armistice terms, stiff as they are. The Americans are through the Argonne, and have taken Beaumont, some 15 miles south of Sédan. I don't think the Boche can last much longer. We hope to reach the Maubeuge line the day after to-morrow."

The next day, with more details of the fight before him, he wrote a fuller appreciation of the feat of his army in crossing the canal:

"The attack on the Sambre Canal by the 1st and 32nd Divisions of the IXth Corps and the 25th Division of the XIIIth Corps was a very fine performance. The country along the canal banks is very enclosed with hedges, just like Surrey. Hostile machine-guns enfiladed the banks, and the line was held in considerable strength by the enemy. The attack again came as a surprise to the Boche, according to statements by prisoners and captured documents. He had issued orders that the canal was to be held to the last, and appears to have thought that we were too exhausted to undertake such an effort, whereas, as a matter of fact, all the divisions in the fight were in first-class fighting form, and showed no signs of fatigue. We succeeded in throwing bridges across 70 feet of open water, at three out of the

four places where we attempted to cross. A thick morning mist assisted us greatly, and it was kind enough to clear up at 9 a.m. to allow the airmen full scope. The Camerons of the 1st Division rushed the enemy post on the near bank of the canal, south of Catillon, carried down their footbridges, then threw them across under the shelter of our barrage; and the whole battalion was across in six minutes without a single casualty, for the Boche barrage came down 300 yards behind them. It was skilfully and boldly done. The line of the canal was crossed and bridge-heads established in less than two hours after zero (5.45 a.m.).

"There were many very gallant deeds done on the canal. The 32nd Division had a stiff fight to get over, and the attempt at Catillon was made memorable by the personal example and courage of a subaltern of the Irish Guards, named Marshall, who was in command of the 16th Lancashire Fusiliers. The bridge was broken by artillery fire, and he not only stood on the bank directing the repairs, but, as soon as they were done, led his men across and was killed at the head of them. I hear that he had been wounded ten times before.[1] After we had gained the passages, resistance weakened, and we got on rapidly on the IXth Corps' front. Morland's XIIIth Corps, which had to take on the Mormal Forest, likewise had a difficult job, for the forest is very thick and it is not easy to keep direction. However, the staff work and leading was so good that no confusion occurred, and the 50th and 18th Divisions passed through the woods to the farther edge, a distance of four miles, without any mishap. In fact, the enemy suffered more from the difficulty of communication than we did. Considering the magnitude of the operations, and the difficulties of the Forest and Canal, we suffered extraordinarily light casualties. The 1st Division, which forded the Canal, captured 1,800 prisoners, and had only 600 casualties; whilst on the whole army front we captured over 4,500 prisoners and 50 guns, with a loss of 2,500 men. Such results are most satisfactory, and, if necessary, we could go on doing this all winter, when the weather permits. But we cannot

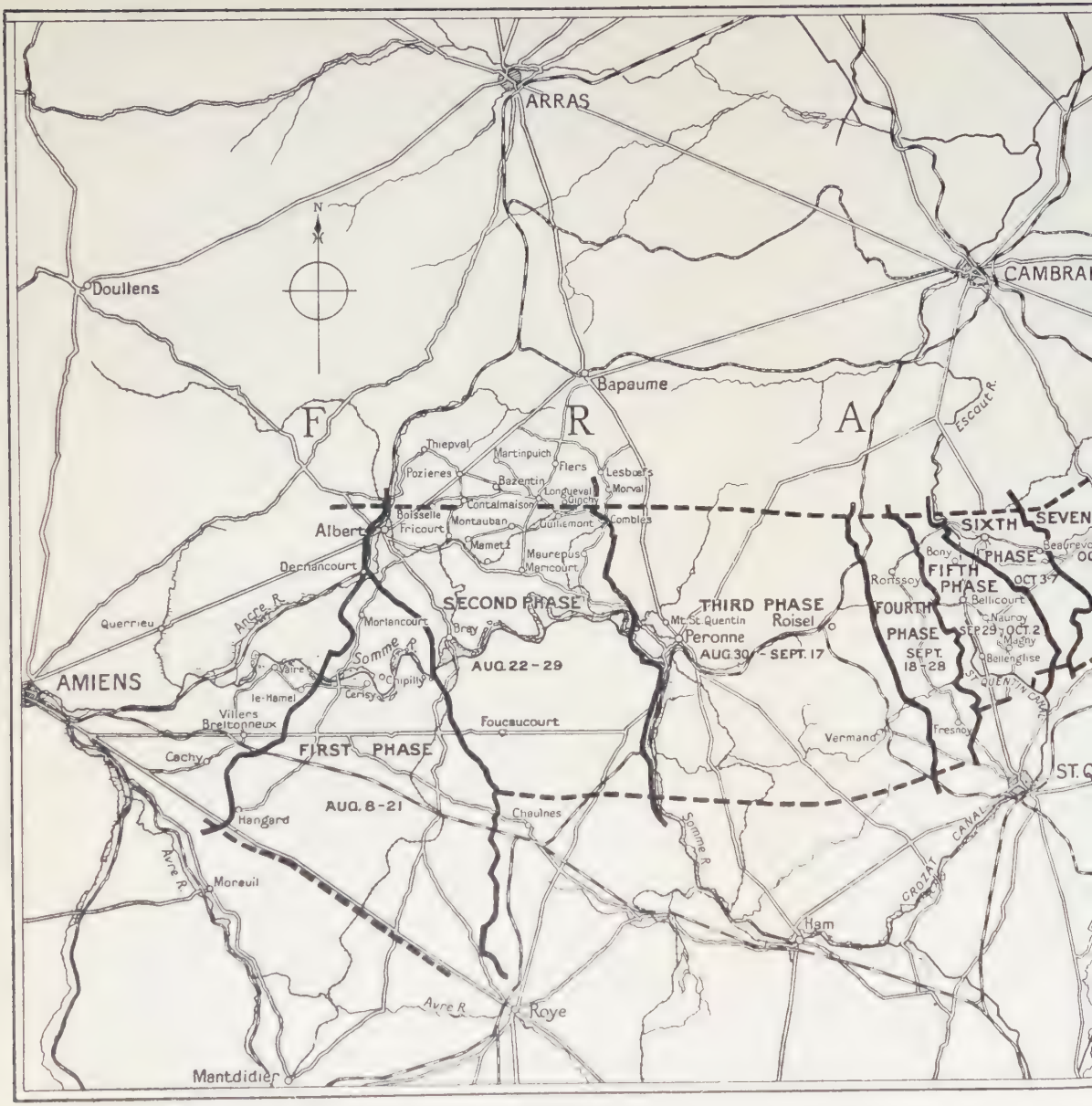
[1] For this action, Lieutenant-Colonel A. W. Marshall was awarded a posthumous V.C. While commanding the battalion he was a lieutenant in the Irish Guards.

do it continuously, weather or no, till the railways are repaired. My army is now thirty miles in front of our railheads, and the broken roads put a great strain upon the lorries. I can manage a farther advance of ten miles, but after that we must call a halt for a week or ten days. But before many days are past we shall have over a flag of truce asking for the terms of the armistice. Prisoners captured yesterday say the Boche will accept any terms; and I think they are right, anyway, it would have been a great mistake to tone down the terms to encourage his acceptance. Several German officers captured to-day were quite drunk when they were brought in. All prisoners were exceedingly glad to be captured, and in the cage there were great rejoicings as each successive batch came in, and friends met with handshakes and cheers."

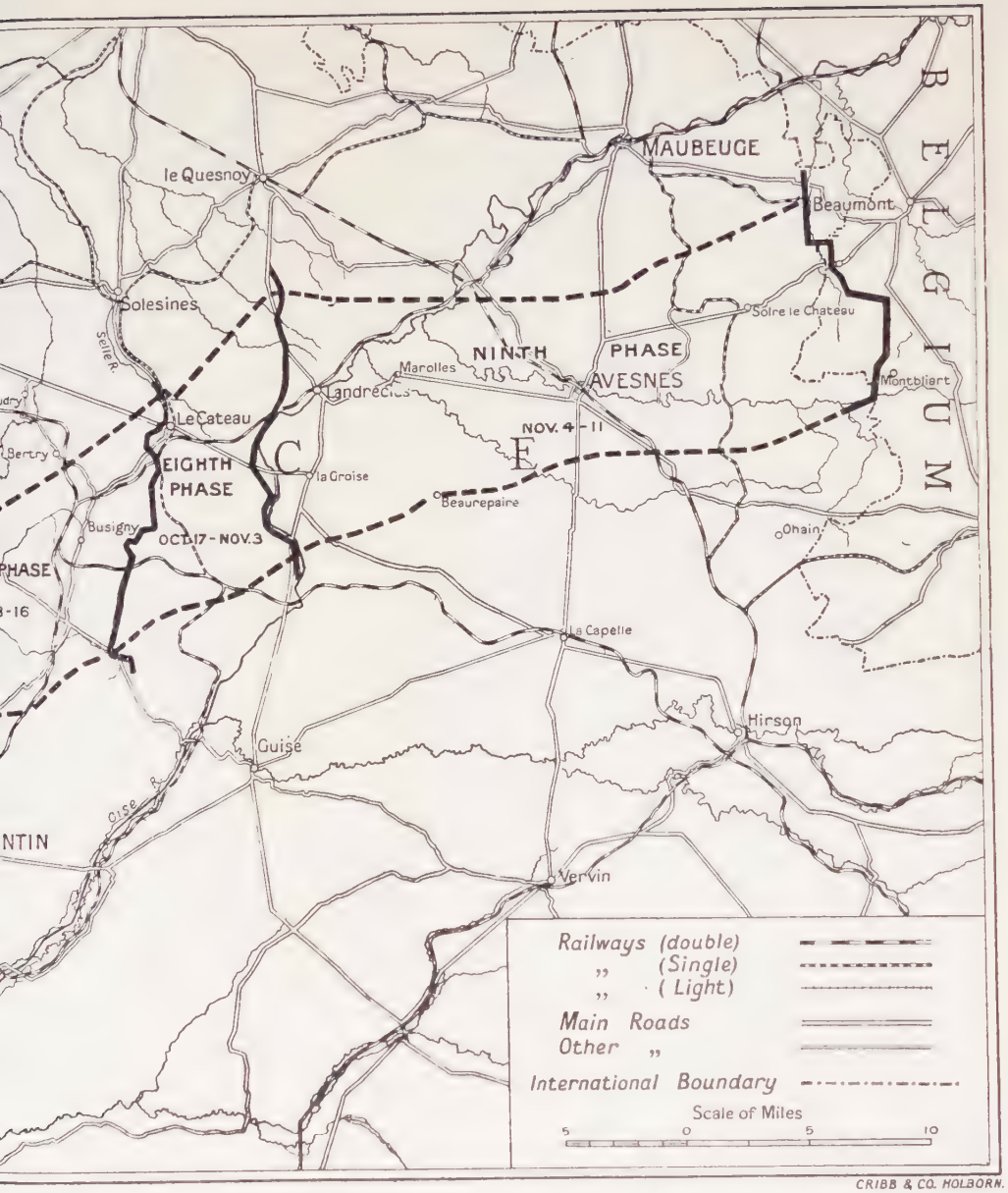
"*November 8.*—At 1 a.m. to-day, the German delegates arrived at Debeney's head-quarters. They were tired, hungry and humble. They were sent on at once by special train from Terguier to Foch's head-quarters at Senlis,[1] where, at 11 a.m., he handed them the terms of the armistice. I hear from du Cane this morning that they have found it necessary to refer the terms to the Government at Berlin. They have been given a time limit of seventy-two hours, which will expire at 11 a.m. on Monday. In view of the mutiny of the fleet at Kiel, I do not see how they can possibly do otherwise than accept the Armistice terms. We have again made good progress to-day on the whole army front against the hostile rear-guards, and have taken Avesnes. No serious opposition."

"*November 10.*—As supply difficulties prevent the continuous advance of the army, I have arranged for Bethel to take command of an independent force of one cavalry and one infantry brigade to follow up the German rear-guards. He will act directly under my orders, and Morland will supply him as best he can. I motored to Avesnes to-day to look round the town. The Germans have blown numerous craters in all the roads, which are blocked, but the town is very little damaged. Bethel and his force are well to the east, in touch with the enemy's rear-guards, which

[1] The meeting actually took place on a railway siding in the Forest of Compiègne.



The Advance of the Fourth Army, Aug



t 8 to November 11, 1918

are still showing fight. I met M. Poincaré, the French President, at Landrécies to-day, but, as he arrived at 3 p.m.—instead of 4 p.m., as I was told he would—I missed the very laudatory speech he made to the assembled populace, praising the work of the British army in the highest terms. This evening, after dinner, my Intelligence told me that a wireless message had been taken in from Germany, telling the delegates to sign the Armistice, but making certain reservations as regards food for Germany. I called up Charlie Grant at Foch's head-quarters to ask what foundation there was for it, and he says that Foch and the delegates are away at some hidden spot, in their train, but that orders to sign have been received. G.H.Q. reports that the Kaiser and the Crown Prince have fled to Holland. Who would have predicted this two months ago? It is wonderful. So ends the greatest war in history. The great German Empire has crumbled to dust in its effort to rule the world by force. It is the pertinacity and determination of the British Empire which have been the prime forces in bringing this about; but, if Germany had not forced the Americans to join by instituting unrestricted submarine warfare, and if she had been less brutal in her methods, the war might have gone on for another two years. Even so, I think we should have won in the end."

"*November 11.*—The Armistice was signed this morning, and hostilities ceased at 11 a.m. Our cavalry posts are just up to the Belgian frontier. So the Fourth Army has driven the Germans from Villers-Bretonneux out of France since August 8. At a meeting of army commanders at Cambrai to-day, D.H. told us that he had settled to send on the Second and Fourth Armies to the Rhine. We are to have four corps of four divisions each. We are to start marching on the 17th. I think I can get the roads repaired by then. I am delighted at being chosen to go to the Rhine, and all my army are equally pleased.

"Looking back now on the events of March, it seems incredible that all this should have come to pass. We owe it to three things: to the spirit of the troops—their recovery after the events of the spring is a glorious testimony to British grit; to the way old Foch pulled the operations of

the Allies together; and to D.H.'s faith in victory this year—he believed in it long before I did, and when all the people at home were talking about plans for 1919. He not only believed in it, but went all out for it, and he must be a proud and thankful man to-day. I have written him a letter of congratulation.[1] I have been looking at the figures of the Fourth Army since August 8. We have captured 79,000 prisoners and 1,100 guns, and our casualties have numbered 110,000. It has been very truly representative of the British-speaking peoples. I have commanded British, Australians, Canadians, South Africans and Americans, and, if we make a proper peace, it is with these peoples the future of the world should rest. From Amiens to Avesnes has been a wonderful story. I may live to write it some day."

[1] Sir Douglas Haig's reply ran: "My Dear Harry,—My heartfelt thanks to you or your friendly words of congratulation, which I deeply appreciate. But I must congratulate you, too, on all that you have achieved since the very beginning of the war; and at the same time thank you for the whole-hearted support you have at all times given me. It is due to the generous support which you and the other high commanders have given me, that I have been able to endure to the victorious end. Every good wish to you, my dear Harry, and

"Believe me,
"Yours ever,
"D. H."

CHAPTER XII

THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION: NORTH RUSSIA

EIGHT days after the signing of the Armistice, Rawlinson learned that the Fourth Army was not to enter Germany.

"*November 19.*—Archie met me with the news that the Fourth Army is not to go into Germany after all. To-day we had a meeting of Army commanders at D.H.'s train, near Cambrai, and discussed the best way of carrying out Foch's orders. He has agreed with Hindenburg that only eleven British divisions are to cross the frontier, and there is to be only one British army in Germany; so Plumer is to go to Cologne, and I am to form a supporting army in Belgium behind the German frontier. Plumer is taking the Canadians with him, and they are to be relieved later by the Australians, so that as many Dominion troops as possible may have been in Germany. There will be considerable heartburning over this, but there is no other solution. I shall have thirteen divisions in my army, and Plumer eleven in his. We are still having difficulties with supplies, as the roads to the Meuse are giving out, and the lorries are overworked, owing to the strain which the destruction of the railways puts on them. I have told Lawrence that I cannot take infantry across the Meuse till Charleroi is opened as a rail-head. Cavalry can only be pushed on with great difficulty. Our prisoners of war are coming back in large numbers, and they are in a better condition than I expected to find them."

"*November 21.*—Hearing that there were a number of our prisoners of war sick in Marche, I sent some of our doctors on there. They came in touch with the German rear-guard, and had to wait until it had cleared out. The treatment of our men in the German prisons seems to have

varied considerably. There are distinct cases of starvation among some of them."

"*November* 24.—The King is coming out to pay us another visit, and this and other things kept me so busy that I could not go to say good-bye to Read and the IInd American Corps. He wrote me a very nice letter, in which he said: 'The uniform courtesy with which we have been treated, and the prompt response to every request made upon your staff, have made service with the British Expeditionary Force a pleasure, which we shall treasure for all time.' I think they expected us to be superior and stand-offish, and were agreeably surprised when we were not. I wish the two armies could have been more mixed up. It would have a done a lot for our future relations. I am proud to have had an American Corps in my command, and the Yanks certainly played up and didn't spare themselves; but, like ourselves, they are not good at learning from other people's experience. If we could have taught them a few more of our wrinkles before they went into battle, their losses would have been much less."

"*December* 1.—To-day I took the King to church with the New Zealanders at Bavai, and then made a round with him through Maubeuge, Avesnes and Landrécies, to see the divisions. The 50th and 46th Divisions gave him a tremendous reception and cheered him to the echo. The 1st, 2nd and 4th received him far more stolidly. It is curious how the traditions of the Regular army cling to the old divisions. The men in all the divisions come from the British people, and in none of them is there more than a sprinkling of professional soldiers. Yet the 1st Division parades as it used to do at Aldershot, and the 46th, when the time to unbend comes, just remember that they are citizens."

"*December* 15.—I have been taking D.H. round some divisions to-day. He is going over to London on December 20, and the Mayor of Dover wants to give him an address of welcome. He said he would agree if all his Army commanders were to come with him. The result has been a proposal for an official reception in London. The War Cabinet objected; but the King stepped in and said if they

SIR HENRY RAWLINSON EXPLAINING TO THE KING THE STORMING OF THE HINDENBURG LINE

Imperial War Museum Photograph. Crown Copyright.

didn't do it he would receive us himself. It is very petty of L.G. to treat D.H. like this. Some of the old friction has been renewed over the question of the treatment of the disabled officers and men. D.H. tells me he is very dissatisfied with the provision which the Government is making for them, and that he has refused to accept any title or reward until reasonable arrangements for their care and future are concluded. This is very noble of him, and should be known. I told him that what I would like best was to go to India as Commander-in-Chief, and I think he will help me."

"*December 20.*—We crossed from Boulogne to Dover on the 19th, arriving at Dover at 10 a.m., where we were given a very splendid welcome. All the warships in the harbour manned ship and cheered D.H. We landed at the Admiralty pier, and drove along the sea-front, which was packed on both sides with cheering school-children. At the station, the Mayor and Lord Harris, as Lord-Lieutenant of Kent, read addresses. We left by special train at 11, and reached Charing Cross at 1.10 p.m. All the way we were escorted by a squadron of 'Camels,' while some star pilots came down alongside the train, diving and swooping at it at intervals. It was a very good show. At every little cottage there was a woman and a child waving a flag, all the way from Dover to London. It was a most touching sight, and I shall not easily forget it. On the platform at Charing Cross, the Duke of Connaught met us, as representing the King; and the P.M. and all the Cabinet, Asquith, the Army Council, Wullie and a host of distinguished people, were there to greet us. Curzon was particularly cordial. I hear he backed the King's proposal for an official reception. Royal carriages took us to Buckingham Palace to lunch. We drove via Pall Mall and St. James's Street, Piccadilly and Constitution Hill. No soldiers lined the streets, but the whole of the route was packed with people, and the welcome they gave us was magnificent. It was all the more effective in that, owing to the Cabinet's opposition, the final arrangements were made rather in a hurry, and, therefore, there was less formality about it. This is the fourth reception of the kind in which I have taken part

—K. after the Sudan in 1898; Lord Bobs in January, 1900; and K. after South Africa in 1902—but this was far the most enthusiastic. The cheering was such as I had never heard before—it was impossible to hear oneself speak. At the Palace, the King, Queen, Princess Mary and Prince Albert received us most cordially, and we were photographed with the King. I sat between Wullie and Lloyd George, who was on the right of the Queen. I did my best to make myself agreeable to the P.M. He thinks D.H. is very obstinate about not accepting an earldom 'until he is absolutely satisfied that the disabled officers and men are provided for.' This has put them in rather a hole, as they cannot give Beatty his earldom or make any other rewards until they have provided for D.H., and naturally they don't want to let the reason for the delay be known. After leaving Buckingham Palace, we went to Marlborough House, where Queen Alexandra and the Queen of Norway received us. We didn't get away till 4 p.m. A great day."

On January 9, a trip to Paris brought Rawlinson into touch with the preparations for the Peace Conference: "I lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Bliss of the American Embassy, whom I had met previously at Eddie Derby's. We had a long talk about the League of Nations, in which Bliss is very interested, and he told me of a paper which Smuts had written on the subject. I went to Versailles and got Studd to give me a copy. It is a very able document, and proposes the representation on the Council of the League of all the greater powers, with some of the minor powers to be chosen by election, each for a limited period. It provides for a general limitation of armaments. I was much impressed by it. It will, at least, provide a sound basis for discussion. But the real difficulties are going to be in the East, which the collapse of Russia and Turkey has thrown into the melting-pot. A League of Nations won't be able to do much there for some time to come. What we want to do is to establish the Georgians and Armenians as independent states in the Caucasus under our protection, or at least with our active support, and try to revive Persia. This would prevent the Trans-Caspian railway at Merv and Samarkand from falling again into the hands of Russia,

and would settle for ever the problem of the defence of India. All this will take some doing, but the gain would be so great that it would be worth all the trouble. What I am afraid is that at Paris they are so involved in European settlements, the League of Nations and German reparations, that they will forget the East. I should much like to go to India as Commander-in-Chief in order to have a hand in these questions, which interest me enormously."

In February, Rawlinson had his first sight of Cologne under British occupation: "I have made a pretty thorough tour of inspection of the garrisons and barracks of Cologne and Bonn. Our troops are most comfortable. The Boche barracks and schools which we inhabit are admirably designed and remarkably well built. I suggested to Plumer that we should get the plans of them as a hint to our own barrack department. I don't admire their architecture, but there is nothing shoddy or cheap about any of their work. I am not surprised that the French, when they see these buildings, are green with envy, and think the Boche can pay for the whole war. The contrast between the French and German barracks is remarkable, and we have very few as good.

"The Germans here like us much better than they do the French. The only trouble with our men is to prevent them being too friendly. Of course, we haven't the reasons for hating the Boche that the French have; but, even if we had, I don't think Tommy Atkins would be much good at it. It takes a Latin race to hate properly.

"After looking round Cologne, I went on to Bonn, where we have several classes of instruction in the University, notably in chemistry and agriculture, with from fifty to sixty students. The Germans have been very good in allowing us to make full use of their models and diagrams for demonstration, and we have as many lecture halls as we want for instruction.

"In the evening I saw the massed pipes of the Highland Brigade play 'Retreat' outside the University, and under the statue of William I. How astonished and furious the old man would have been at the thought of Scottish troops parading in front of his pet university. After-

wards they took me on to a house, which belongs to the student clubs of the university, where the art of duelling is practised. It consists of several rooms where much beer-drinking goes on, and has a special annexe where the young men retire to be sick when they have drunk more than their fill. It is regularly fitted up for the purpose, with marble slabs and a rail to hold on to when being sick.

"The duelling rooms have many pictures and sketches of duelling, and a number of the whippy kind of sabres used by students. There is a small surgery attached, with appliances for stitching up the wounds. I thought the whole show disgusting, and was glad to get away from it.

"Last night Plumer had a reception, and I had a long talk with Jacob[1] about India. I am pleased to find that his views are very much in agreement with my own, and he is as anxious as I am for an early settlement in the East."

The demobilization of the Fourth Army proceeded smoothly, and Rawlinson had only two serious worries. The first of these was that men were disappearing much faster than were the horses; the second was that the enormous amount of German war material abandoned in Belgium was rapidly deteriorating and disappearing. Of the former he wrote: "We have got nearly 80,000 horses in this army, and men are dwindling all the time. Already there are cases of one man having to look after five horses, and this leads to grumbling, naturally enough, when the men are looking to have an easy time. As far as I can see, the position must get worse. We can't turn the horses out in this weather, and the Belgians can't buy them fast enough. In the most favourable circumstances, I can't hope to get rid of more than 20,000 horses in the next month, and men will be going home much faster than that. The only solution that I can see is to give the French and Belgians long credits, and let them take the horses away without immediate payment. But this, I suppose, would require the sanction of the Treasury, and things must have changed a good deal in Whitehall if that can be obtained in time to be of any use. This is one of the minor problems of dissolving a big army, which no one foresaw."

[1] Now Field-Marshal Sir Claud Jacob.

Of the other problem he wrote to Sir John Cowans on February 21: "I don't know if you realize the enormous amount of material and stores left behind by the Germans in Belgium. I am informed that, at a conservative estimate, it is worth 100 millions. There are over 800 barge-loads, miles of railway trains, huge dumps of stores, and in some places factories packed full. We have, so far, unloaded 120 of the barges, and the wharves are already congested with material of every sort. The signal stores contain 6,000 tons of iron wire, some 500 telephone switchboards, innumerable batteries and telephone sets, and 1,800 telegraph poles. My people estimate that there are at least 2,000 tons of copper, worth £200 a ton. Leaving guns and ammunition out of account, as of doubtful value in these piping times of peace, there are stacks of medical stores, horseshoes, chaff-cutters, lorries, tents and baths, distributed all over the country, and the inhabitants are helping themselves pretty freely, for we can't guard the lot. In a short time there will be no guards at all, for this army is in rapid process of dissolution and, I gather, will have disappeared altogether before the end of March. You can hardly expect Plumer, with his manifold duties at Cologne, to look after a little matter like this; but, unless something is done quickly, we shall be throwing money away by the handful."

This forecast of the demise of the Fourth Army proved correct, and on March 24, after a short trip round the Ypres front with Lady Rawlinson, he came home with the news that he was to go to Aldershot in October.

The spring and early summer passed quickly and pleasantly, with a return to the diversions of peace-time, and in preparations for the re-creation of the Regular army. A little hunting with the Cottesmore before the season ended, some golf, consultations as to the best way to restore army polo, a return to his beloved paint-box, and peace celebrations in London and Paris, employed Rawlinson's leisure; while the chairmanship of a committee on the future of the Royal Engineers, and evidence before other army committees, kept him from feeling idle. Just as he was finishing the report of his committee, came news that he was again wanted for a more serious task.

The story of our enterprise in North Russia is that of one of those strange adventures into which we, as the predominating sea power, are apt to be drawn. It was very literally a side-show, and a side-show which was in progress when the great drama of 1918 reached its climax and the curtain fell. It attracted, therefore, very little attention, but it furnishes one more example of what a few resolute Englishmen can achieve in most unpropitious circumstances. When the failure of the Dardanelles expedition showed that it was not possible to open communication with Russia by way of the Black Sea, the construction of a railway from Petrograd to Murmansk—a port of the White Sea west of Archangel, less liable to be closed by ice—was begun and completed. Through this channel a great quantity of war material reached the Russian armies, and Murmansk became an important base depot. After the peace of Brest-Litovsk was concluded between Germany and Russia, the former showed evident signs that she was ambitious of gaining control both of the Baltic and the White Sea. A German expedition under General von der Goltz landed in Finland, and with the aid of the White Finns made considerable progress. In the spring of 1918, there appeared to be a danger that the Germans would gain possession of Murmansk and Archangel, and of the stores at those ports, in which event they might turn them into submarine bases. It happened, also, at this time that the Czecho-Slovakian prisoners of war in Russia had formed themselves into a legion, and had announced their intention of capping the march of Xenophon's Ten Thousand by making their way to Murmansk. The Soviet Government of Moscow had not yet made up its mind as to where it would stand in European affairs, and was suspicious of the designs of Germany. It, therefore, appealed to the Allies to aid it in holding the ports of the White Sea.

It appeared to be very desirable to accept this invitation, both in order to aid the Czecho-Slovakians and to check German influence in North Russia. We already had a small naval squadron in the White Sea under the command of Rear-Admiral T. Kemp, and upon us devolved the main burden. Accordingly, Major-General F. Poole was sent to Murmansk in

May, 1918, and landed there on May 24, with instructions to organize a North Russian Expeditionary Force. The material for such a force was none too promising. It consisted of some 500 blue-jackets from Admiral Kemp's squadron; 300 French soldiers, mostly invalids; 1,400 Serbs only partially armed and including many sick; and some nondescript bands of Russians and Finns of doubtful enthusiasm and loyalty. 400 Marines then arrived and formed the backbone of General Poole's force, which, a month later, was further strengthened by the appearance of Major-General Maynard, with one company of infantry, one company of engineers and another of machine-guns. But, before Maynard had arrived, a complete change had come over the situation. At the end of May, the Czecho-Slovakian Legion, which was to have formed the major part of the North Russian Expeditionary Force, quarrelled with the Bolsheviks, came into collision with Soviet troops, and was unable to make its way north. Then, early in June, the Moscow Government turned definitely against the Allies and ordered them to leave North Russia. It, therefore, became necessary to disarm the Red Russian troops, who were to have formed another part of the expedition. We were then in a dilemma. The alternatives were to take the risk of remaining with very small forces, or to abandon the White Sea coast to the Germans. It was decided to remain. The defection of the Red Russians was to some extent compensated for by the fact that Murmansk and Archangel became places of refuge for White Russians; and, early in August, General Poole, with a handful of men and the assistance of Admiral Kemp, was able to support a counter-revolution in Archangel and to gain control of that port. This in the end proved to be of doubtful advantage, as it divided energies of which we had no superfluity.

As the summer of 1918 advanced, Russia appeared to be breaking up into a number of separate governments. The Czech legion, foiled in its attempt to reach the White Sea, was established in Siberia; and here a Siberian Government was gradually formed under the leadership of Admiral Koltchak. To aid the Czechs, British, American and Japanese detachments had been landed at Vladivostok, and

these aided the new government. Denekin had formed a South Russian Government in the Crimea, and a North Russian Provisional Government had been created at Archangel. These were all opposed to the Central Government of Moscow. The best way out of our entanglement in North Russia appeared to be to support the anti-Soviet Government, at least until such a time as all danger from German enterprise had passed. Accordingly, reinforcements were sent to the White Sea; and, in October, General Ironside took over command from General Poole at Archangel, General Maynard remaining in command at Murmansk. By bluff and enterprise Maynard succeeded in gaining control of the whole of North Karelia, and had established himself on Lake Onega, within 160 miles of Petrograd. Impressed by this progress, von der Goltz was instructing his agents to find out how many Allied divisions were in North Russia. Meanwhile, the Archangel force had penetrated far up the river Dwina and the Vologda railway. So, when the armistice with Germany was signed, and with it the danger from von der Goltz's force was removed, we were very deeply involved, and the approach of winter made a speedy evacuation impossible. Ere winter closed in, Admiral Koltchak was making good progress in Siberia, and the best prospect for the establishment of a Northern Russian Government, now the goal of our enterprise, appeared to be to connect with him in the spring. A branch line from the Trans-Siberian railway led to Kotlas on the Dwina, which was not beyond the reach of the Archangel force. Archangel, therefore, became the main centre of enterprise, and, by a fine feat of organization and endurance, 2,000 of Maynard's men were transferred in sleighs across the snows from the Murmansk to the Archangel front.

The spring of 1919 found the greater part of Eastern Europe in a ferment. In March, the Siberians began a campaign in Eastern Russia, and in the same month the Bolsheviks attacked the Southern Russians in the Crimea. The Poles invaded the Ukraine, and the Finns began to turn the Bolsheviks out of their country. In May, General Yudenitch organized, in conjunction with Esthonia, a

campaign directed against Petrograd; in the same month, the Hungarians invaded Czecho-Slovakia, and the Yugo-Slavs attacked the Austrians in Carinthia. We were, by then, committed on the Indian frontier to the third Afghan war, and our attempts to enable the Caucasian republics to establish themselves independently of Russia were not meeting with much success. Our army was in an advanced state of dissolution, and that part of it which had not returned to civil life was clamorous for demobilization. Our military resources were, therefore, exiguous, and public opinion at home was expressing itself strongly against any further enterprises in Russia. But Koltchak was doing well, and the best way out still seemed to be to unite the North Russians with him, and then to depart. The policy of making our chief effort from Archangel in the hope of joining Koltchak at Kotlas, therefore, still held the field.

By the summer of 1919, the support given by the Allies to the various anti-Soviet governments in Russia had rallied to the support of Moscow many Russians who, while they had no great sympathy with the Bolsheviks' political ideals, had less desire to see their country invaded by foreigners. This enabled the Soviet Government to deal, from its central position, with each of the enemies on the fringe of its territory in turn. Denekin was defeated in the Crimea; a well-organized counter-offensive drove Koltchak back; and Yudenitch's enterprise was overwhelmed. It then became clear that it was hopeless to rely upon White Russian assistance to extricate us, and it only remained to get away as best we could. The bulk of Ironside's and Maynard's British troops consisted of men of low category, who had not been considered fit for campaigning in France; they had been subjected to the rigours of an Arctic winter, and were most of them citizen soldiers eager to be demobilized. Therefore, in the summer of 1919, two brigades of volunteers were formed, and were sent out under Brigadier-Generals Grogan and Sadleir-Jackson to relieve the war-weary. By July there were clear signs that the Moscow Government was turning its attention to North Russia; and, unless our men could be got away before another winter supervened, there was risk of a disaster. To evacuate forces

in two widely separated districts required some central supervision, and it was in these circumstances that the Government turned to Rawlinson. On July 26, he was spending a quiet week-end in the country, where he had gone after receiving the honorary degree of D.C.L. at Cambridge, when a telegram arrived from Sir Henry Wilson, asking him to come up to town at once. "That's North Russia," he at once said, and on reaching London found that his surmise was correct.

"*July 31.*—North Russia is a nasty job, but I have decided to accept it. The Government is in a hole, and I consider it my duty to go and try to help them out of it. There are, no doubt, risks, but there are risks in most things that are worth undertaking, and the problem is desperately interesting. I accepted on condition that they sent me reinforcements and some tanks, and this both H. Wilson and Winston promised to do. Winston thanked me profusely for going, saying it was a very sporting thing to do. I have collected an excellent staff, with Holland as my Chief of the Staff, and Luckock and Vivian from the old Fourth Army. I have Jackson and Heywood with me, who will make excellent commanders if anything goes wrong with Ironside or Maynard. I explained to Winston that in order to cover the withdrawal it would almost certainly be necessary to make an attack, probably both at Archangel and at Murmansk. He has agreed to that."

"*August 4.*—S.S. *Czaritza*. Here I am off to the wars again, on a mission which looks to be as difficult as any I have ever undertaken, but I have no doubt that with the luck which usually accompanies me, I shall get through all right. I am glad to have sailed on August 4, because four is my lucky number. I saw the new moon over my left shoulder this afternoon, and there is a black cat in the 'G' office. So all the omens are favourable.

"My instructions, which were handed me by Winston in a long interview on the 2nd, give me a completely free hand; and it is clear from what H.W. said to me that the politicians won't interfere unless things go badly wrong. There are only two contingencies which I really fear; one is the failure of rain on the Upper Dwina, which would make

the withdrawal of the troops difficult, and the saving of the five river gunboats impossible; the other is treachery on the part of the Russian troops under Miller. I am told that this is very improbable, but it is well to look at the worst that could happen and be prepared for it."

On the way out, on August 8, news arrived by wireless that Rawlinson was to be created a baron, with a grant of £30,000. Though he was aware that this was coming, he was naturally especially pleased to hear of it definitely on the first anniversary of the battle of Amiens. The first congratulations came from his new command.

"*August 9.*—We reached Murmansk to-day, and were alongside the quay at 3 p.m. North Russia is not an attractive looking country. I was surprised at the size of Murmansk, and the possibilities of its harbour. There are plenty of large sheds, now full of ordnance stores, which could be made into temporary accommodation, and at Kola, some seven miles farther up the inlet, Luckock tells me there is plenty of room to put up hutments, and an abundance of timber. There are undoubted possibilities at Murmansk for housing civilians from Archangel and elsewhere. We should have to start a ferry service from Archangel, but that should not be difficult. Maynard sent me a sheaf of papers with a very good appreciation of his situation. His recent success on Lake Onega, in which he captured two Bolshevik gunboats and ran another ashore, has evidently heartened him up. All we want to do is to persuade Miller to transfer the seat of government from Archangel to Murmansk, and to bring as many of his people here as possible, when we can make him quite safe. It is a pity we ever went to Archangel."

"*August 11.*—Archangel. We were alongside here by 11 this morning, after a good passage from Murmansk. Ironside met me on arrival, and I have discussed the whole situation with him. As usual, it looks much more hopeful on the spot than it did in London, and is far more satisfactory than I had dared to expect. Yesterday, Sadleir-Jackson did quite a good attack on the Bolsheviks on both banks of the Dwina. He captured over 1,000 prisoners and 12 guns. This success is just what I wanted. It will

greatly hearten the White Russians, and keep the Bolshies from interfering with our withdrawal. Meanwhile, the position of the White Russians is desperate. Their troops won't fight alone, and their officers are hopeless. I find that Ironside is of the opinion I had already formed, that they will never hold Archangel against the Bolsheviks, and their only chance is to come to Murmansk. The strength of my army, as far as I can ascertain, is about 53,000; of which 16,000 are at Murmansk under Maynard, and 37,000 at Archangel under Ironside. Maynard has 5,000, and Ironside 13,000, British; the rest are a job-lot—good, bad and indifferent—mostly bad."

"*August 12.*—This has been a day of conferences, as the result of which I have formed a definite plan on which everyone can work. I have decided to carry out the evacuation of Archangel as Ironside proposes, and to let Maynard hold on to his present position till Archangel is clear, at the end of September. Maynard will then withdraw, leaving a mission with the Russians to keep them going. All should be clear by the middle of October, and it is very unlikely that the sea will freeze before then. In any case, Ironside will begin his withdrawal on September 1. If the river has risen sufficiently by that time, we will get the gunboats away, and perhaps the monitors too; but, if not, we must destroy them. Anyway, we have now a very definite scheme, with all dates fixed, and I think everyone knows what is required. The only doubtful element is Miller, who cannot make up his mind to desert Archangel. He is a weak man, and afraid of taking the responsibility for a bold decision. He wants me to give him a direct order to go to Murmansk, which would, of course, throw the responsibility for maintaining the White Russians there on the British Government; and this I will not do, though I think I may persuade him to fall in with my views. I sympathize with him, for he has a grave decision to take, and will have trouble with troops and civil population; but if he remains he will almost certainly be scuppered. I have given him till the 16th at noon to make up his mind. The trouble with the White Russians is that they have no real leaders of character and determination, and their subor-

dinates are a hopeless lot. Many of them are quite willing to fight, but more than unwilling to do any work when there is no fighting. The Bolos, on the other, hand know what they want, and are working hard to get it."

"*August 16.*—To-day I met Miller with some half-dozen of his commanding officers. He began a long address, in which he suggested several childish offensives, and then asked us to postpone the date of our departure for a month. This I flatly refused to do, telling him that I must stick to the dates fixed. One of his lieutenants suggested an advance on Petrograd with all our forces. These people have no ideas beyond suggesting desperate enterprises, which they won't attempt when the time comes, and wouldn't carry through if they did. Miller again said that we must expect opposition from the Russian army and civil population, and I told him we were quite prepared for that. The truth is that he and his officers are afraid of their men. They know that when we have gone their men won't fight, and it is quite on the cards that they will murder their officers. I am quite prepared to send the officers away to Reval, but Miller will not let them go; and I am pretty sure that he means to stick to Archangel, instead of moving his troops and any civilians that want protection to Murmansk, which is quite feasible. In fact, he would rather die in a hopeless cause than appear to run away, though the move to Murmansk is the only sensible military measure."

"*August 30.*—I learn that Miller has received direct orders from Koltchak to hold on to Archangel at all costs and not to go to Murmansk, so that is the power behind the throne. Koltchak's chance of uniting with Miller is nil, and Miller will fail for certain, and apparently is afraid to tell Koltchak so. All this makes my job more difficult; but, even so, our fellows have played up so well that it is not as difficult as I thought it was going to be."

"*September 3.*—I embarked to-day on the *Retsivan* to go up the Dwina. She is a comfortable river steamer, with plenty of room on board. The Dwina is not what I expected. The lower reaches, on which there are a number of steamers, reminded me of the Nile; but at and after the junction with the Pinega the river narrows to about 700

yards' width, and the banks rise 50 to 60 feet above the water level, with thick pine forest along the banks, except where the village clearings are. Parts of the river are very picturesque, and the autumn tints are beautiful. There is one tree—a species of birch, I think—which turns a brilliant scarlet and is quite lovely."

"*September 5.*—Sadleir-Jackson met me yesterday. He is all ready for his withdrawal. We have got the gunboats away, but Monitor 25 is high and dry on a sandbank, and will have to be destroyed. I am told that 27 is also stuck fast. Jackson is very pleased with his Royal Fusiliers, but speaks very disparagingly of his White Russians. He thinks that when we pass down, their officers will make a bolt to come with us. To-day I visited the battle position on the Selembla river, which is a small tributary of the Dwina, and runs through a truly beautiful narrow valley, through dense pine forests. The Bolos had very thoroughly defended the far bank with trenches, block-houses and strong wire. I saw in these defences distinct traces of German principles, and am pretty sure that they were laid out by a German engineer. The position was turned by way of a narrow path through the forest. Jenkins, the South African colonel who commanded the column which made the turning movement, took us round, and gave us a most interesting description of all that took place. He is a first-rate commander, belonging to the Cape Mounted Rifles. The forest is very thick, but there are places where the trees are just far enough apart to allow ponies to be led through, and for the rest they had to clear a path. The glades are beautiful with the birch and ash in their autumn dress sparkling among the dark pines. The Bolo is not showing much activity. He took a knock when he last attacked on the Dwina front, and has remained quiet ever since. We have the river well mined. It is difficult to lay mines, but practically impossible to sweep them. Altham, who commands the naval flotilla, has done his job very skilfully. I don't think we shall have much difficulty in getting away till we near Archangel, when it will depend on how Miller's friends behave."

"*September 13.*—All is going well; the enemy attacked Sadleir-Jackson on the 11th on the Dwina, and was heavily

LORD RAWLINSON INTERROGATING A BOLSHEVIK PRISONER

Imperial War Museum Photograph. Crown Copyright.

repulsed. This is just what we wanted to enable us to begin our retirement, which, in fact, started yesterday. The river has suddenly begun to rise, and the monitors are afloat, and there is a chance of saving them after all. Maynard's attack, in which his East Surreys play the chief part, opens to-morrow."

"*September 15.*—Maynard's attack has started well. The East Surreys have advanced several miles, and young Burrows of the 5th D.G.'s, with his Russians, has taken Siding 5 on the Murmansk railway with two locomotives and a good lot of rolling-stock. So far, 500 prisoners and two guns are reported captured, which is satisfactory. Only eight British wounded are reported, but I cannot believe that this is the total of our casualties."

Later Rawlinson heard from Burrows an account of the capture of Siding 5, which is typical of the kind of fighting that took place: "I had a long talk with young Burrows, who did so well in taking Siding 5. The Russian troops, as well as the Serbs, refused to take part in the enterprise, because they said it was too dangerous. The Serbs did not trust the Russians, who were prompted by the commander of their lake flotilla. So Burrows got leave to call for volunteers. The whole of our own lake flotilla volunteered to a man, and 83 Russians as well, making a total of just under a hundred. With these Burrows crossed the Liguna inlet at night, surprised Siding 5, and took 300 prisoners. One sergeant-major, a South African, was asleep when they landed, and got left behind, and only woke up half an hour after they had started. Being an expert tracker, he thought he could easily find the column, but he missed his way, and eventually came out at Siding 4, instead of 5. There he saw a number of the enemy busily loading trucks. So, having settled himself comfortably in a good position, he proceeded to open fire at 700 yards' range. Consternation ensued, and most of the Bolos bolted into the forest. Having given them 50 to 60 rounds, and getting short of ammunition, he set off again into the forest, where he met four Bolos who had also lost their way. These he took prisoners, but, as he could not get them away, he made them sit down under a tree, and taking out a Mills grenade, extracted the

pin and secreted the bomb in the moss. He moved off quickly, when the bomb exploded, disabling the four Bolos, and so he got safely back. After the capture of Siding 5, an Australian wandered off to a cottage, into which he walked and ordered breakfast. While he was eating, five armed Bolos came in at the door. He promptly threw a Mills grenade on the floor, and jumped out of the window. Looking in again through the window, he found three Bolos dead, and the lady of the house complaining bitterly of the mess he had made. So he helped her to tidy up, and then rejoined his pals.

"It was intended to hold Siding 5 permanently, which Burrows could have done had his party been between three and four hundred, as originally arranged; but the refusal of the Russians and Serbs to take part left him too weak, and he had to withdraw. If he had been able to remain, none of the Bolos to the north would have escaped. Still, it was a fine bold enterprise, and shows what a resolute leader can do amongst these scallywags. I gave Burrows a D.S.O. as an immediate reward."

"*September 19.*—To-day I went off with Ironside to see another detachment of my heterogeneous army—the Poles, who are leaving to-morrow. They are a fine lot of men, though some of them are very young. I got a telegram at lunch, saying that Maynard was not well, so I am sending Jackson over to take his place. Sadleir-Jackson's troops are withdrawing slowly down the Dwina, and Grogan's down the Pinega. It is satisfactory to have got all the British troops on the Archangel front out of touch with the enemy. Except for some gross treachery during the final stage at Archangel, which is possible, but unlikely, we shall get away from there without any difficulty now. On the Murmansk side, things are not going as well as I had hoped. The offensive was designed to leave the Russians on a narrow front which they could hold comfortably, but we shall not be able to do that now. After all, it is mainly Miller's responsibility, as he wouldn't take my advice and concentrate at Murmansk. I dined with the H.L.I., and on my way home saw the Northern Lights, which were quite wonderful."

"*September 23.*—All is going smoothly, so I snatched a couple of hours to do a sketch of autumn tints on the Tundra. The river is amazingly beautiful, with all the birch and mountain ash turning scarlet and yellow, and the red moss. It was quite warm sitting in the shade, the breeze being damp and soft. When I got back I heard that the Russians had shot the colonel of a Bolo regiment, whom we had captured the other day. He had been in correspondence with our Intelligence department, with a view to coming over to our side. This is very bad. One never knows where one is from day to day with these people."

"*September 26.*—The whole of the troops and naval craft will be clear of Archangel by 2 p.m. to-morrow. So the worst half of the job is done without any untoward incident. I said good-bye to Miller and Ironside, and left at 5 p.m. to-day for Murmansk. Maynard is seriously ill, and I have confirmed Jackson in command there."

"*Murmansk, October 3.*—Sharp frost last night, and all the ground is white, so our arrangements will be completed just at the right time. I came here in a German transport, the *Schleswig*, which we had only taken over under the terms of the peace treaty a month ago. She is a very comfortable ship. It is poetic justice that, as the Germans brought us here, they should help to take us away. I had a visit from the Chinese Consul about getting away the six hundred Chinese who are on the railway. I have had to go into the question of evacuating the Serbs, Koreans, and Chinese; the Poles have gone. I think I have arranged it in an equitable way. Though, now that they see we are really going, they all want to be off first."

"*October 8.*—The last train of Serbs left Kern this morning, so they should be at Murmansk to-day. I have little fear but that they will get through all right, now that they know that their ship is waiting for them at Murmansk. I inspected two companies of them on parade this morning, presented them with decorations, and made them a farewell speech. They are a remarkably fine-looking lot of men, and the best of the Allied detachments I have had here. It is curious, looking back to the origins of the war, how

they distrust and even hate the Russians. I wonder what effect this will have in the future in the Balkans. In the Fourth Army, I commanded troops of all the English-speaking peoples, and here I have had under me specimens of most of the Allies, except Japs and Rumanians. It has been an interesting experience, but one I should not care to repeat. They are all on their way home now, without fighting with each other. Though I quite expected my Serbs and Russians to come to blows before they parted.

"We left the quay at Murmansk at 4 p.m. All the officers were there to bid us farewell. As we passed down the inlet, each naval ship we came to manned ship and gave us three hearty cheers. *Glory* and *Erebus* looked very smart. It was an impressive sight, and gave me a lump in my throat. The East Surreys in the *Santa Elena* also crowded the decks and cheered like mad. As we passed into the open sea, all the hills were covered with snow right down to the water's edge, and it was intensely cold. A reminder that our programme had been drawn up pretty exactly. So ends one of the queerest adventures of my life."

Rawlinson landed at Glasgow on October 13, to be met by a telegram of congratulation from the King, and to receive a week later the formal thanks of the Cabinet. On November 5, he took his seat in the House of Lords as Baron Rawlinson of Trent, being introduced by Field-Marshal Lord Methuen and Lord Lovat. By the middle of the month he had taken over the Aldershot Command from Sir Archibald Murray, and there he spent a busy and happy nine months. The business of reconstructing our most important military command was a good deal hampered by the constant calls for troops for Ireland; but, in spite of the many difficulties, he managed to restart much of the organization of peace training, and the many sporting and social activities of a great military centre. While at Aldershot, he watched carefully the development of those Eastern problems in which he was particularly interested, and in the middle of May, 1920, wrote: "The Turks have got their peace terms at last. They are preposterous. We are to have Mesopotamia and Palestine, and the French,

Syria, under mandate from the League of Nations. I have no particular objection to that; though my own view is that it would pay us best to come out of Persia and Mesopotamia, except Basra, and stick to controlling the Persian Gulf. The less we are involved in the interior of Asia Minor the better I am pleased. We are a sea power, and the more we stick to the coast and avoid the interior the better for us. The peace terms give the greater part of Anatolia and Eastern Thrace to the Greeks. This is preposterous. There is not the remotest chance of our being able to enforce these terms. We have not got an army at present—what we have is in Ireland. The French, owing to their Moroccan interest, will want to keep in with the Mohammedan world. So everything depends on the Greeks. The Greeks will not even say 'thank you' to us for putting them in Anatolia and Thrace. They will think they have done it all themselves. In any case the 'thank you' of the Greeks is of no use to us; while a friendly Turkey means that we could have erected a substantial barrier across Asia against Bolshevism. This was perfectly possible eighteen months ago, and to-day it is impossible. Now we have the Bolshies not only established in Central Asia, but in Kabul itself. I don't believe for a moment that the Greeks will be able to hold Anatolia or Eastern Thrace, and we cannot afford to bolster them up. Besides, I have a distinct recollection of Lloyd George's saying, when he announced our war aims in 1918, that it was no part of our policy to drive the Turk out of the 'rich and renowned lands of Thrace.' It will be no use our saying that times have changed since that announcement was made. The Mohammedan world will accuse us of breaking our word, and our whole hold over it has always depended on the fact that we have established the tradition that an Englishman's word is his bond. We are in for a lot of trouble, and all because Lloyd George, who knows nothing and cares nothing about the East, eats out of the hand of Veniselos."

Despite these gloomy and, as events proved, justified forebodings, Rawlinson was still burning to take an active part in the settlement of the problems of the East, and on August 20 he learned with joy that the King had approved

of his appointment as Commander-in-Chief in India. On November 2 he left London on his way to what had been, for long, the goal of his ambition. On the journey across France with Lady Rawlinson, he stopped at Amiens for a pleasant little ceremony. He was charged by the King to present to the cathedral a silk Union Jack, in memory of the part played by the British Army in the defence of the town: "We motored slowly to the main west door of the cathedral, where the bishop, in full canonicals, and all the clergy were assembled to receive me. I shook hands with the bishop, who is an old friend. We then processed up the cathedral; the bishop in the centre, the French General on the right, and I on the left. When we were all seated, the bishop delivered an address in which he told how I had been intimately connected with Amiens throughout 1916–17 and 1918. How the Fourth Army had won the battle of August 8, and had continued its victorious career until the enemy was brought to terms. He was very generous and flattering, and ended by giving us his blessing on my new work in India. I then formally presented the flag in the name of the King, the British Government and the British Army. Altogether, a simple and impressive ceremony, in which I was proud to have taken part."

In Paris he had the pleasure of meeting Foch, Joffre, Debeney and Weygand, and other old friends of the war. "We had a very interesting talk about the war. All abused Ludendorff, saying he was a typical Prussian General Staff officer, quite unable to look beyond the General Staff point of view, and lacking in imagination. Hindenburg, on the other hand, they praised as a fine, bluff old soldier and a gentleman, who did his utmost in a straightforward manner for his Emperor and his Fatherland. There was quite a heated argument about the end of the war. Some contended that we should have gained much more if we had continued fighting, instead of signing the Armistice; but this Foch would not admit, and he was right. I greatly enjoyed seeing my old friends, and was much interested in their frank talks about great events. They all wished me every possible good fortune in India."

CHAPTER XIII

THE DEFENCE OF INDIA: I. THE PROBLEM

THE modern organization of the defence of India may be dated from the appointment of Lord Kitchener in 1902, to be Commander-in-Chief. During, and for some time after, the reign of Lord Roberts, the training for war of the army in India had been more efficient, in most respects, than that of the army at home. The development of British musketry, which proved to be our salvation in 1914, may be traced to reforms introduced by Lord Roberts; while the frequent occurrence of frontier campaigns provided valuable practical experience, and attracted to India many of our keenest officers. But the comparative quiescence of the frontier tribes, after the great outbreak of 1897, caused the ambitious to look to Egypt or London for prospects of distinction and advancement; and the Indian Army had no taste of the tonic of the South African war, which had braced the British Army; so that neither in organization, nor in training, had it kept pace with the progress at home.

Lord Kitchener, on arrival in India, had found that a great part of the army was scattered in small military stations, most of them chosen to meet the conditions which had arisen out of the Mutiny, and that these were grouped for purposes of administration into areas of varied extent which had little or no relation to existing military requirements.

As the bases of his reforms, Lord Kitchener enunciated four principles:

(1) That the main function of the army was to defend the North-West frontier against an aggressive enemy.

(2) That the army in peace should be organized, distributed and trained in units of command similar to those in which it would take the field in war

(3) That the maintenance of internal security was a means to an end; namely, to set free the field army to carry out its functions.

(4) That all fighting units, in their several spheres, should be equally capable of carrying out all the rôles of an army in the field, and that all should be given an equal chance in experience and training of bearing these rôles.

Eventually Lord Kitchener's proposals resulted in the organization of the military forces in India into two armies, a Northern and a Southern, comprising ten divisions and some additional troops. But the completion of the scheme involved an extensive redistribution of troops, which, in turn, involved the creation of new military stations, and the Indian Treasury was not in a position to meet quickly the great expense which this involved. So even the framework of Lord Kitchener's reforms was incomplete when the Great War broke out. A great part of his time had been taken up in a prolonged struggle with the Viceroy over the organization of the higher command. Prior to 1906, there were two military members of the Viceroy's Executive Council; the commander-in-chief, responsible for command; and the military member, responsible for supply. Lord Kitchener won his fight for the abolition of this dual control; and in 1909, after a short sojourn in a half-way house, the commander-in-chief became solely responsible for the command, supply and administration of the army.

It had taken so much effort to obtain this concession, that consequential changes necessary had been overlooked, and in 1914 each of the ten divisions of the army dealt direct with army head-quarters on all questions other than those of command and training. The army commanders, solely concerned with the training of their troops, had no responsibility for administration and, consequently, no administrative staffs. The result was a great congestion of work at army head-quarters, and some of the blunders which occurred during the Great War were due to this defect in organization. But the prime cause of such breakdowns as occurred—notably of the failure of the medical and administrative services in Mesopotamia in 1915—was

that India was suddenly called upon to undertake great tasks for which no sufficient preparation had been made. Both the Government of India and the British Government were agreed that India was not required to maintain forces, out of Indian revenue, in readiness for imperial service outside India, in excess of the forces required for self-defence. In fact, the total strength of the Indian Army in August, 1914, was 155,423, and at the time of the Armistice 573,484. In the interval, large Indian forces had been employed in France, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Salonika, and smaller forces in a number of other places outside India. For this great effort India was but poorly equipped. There was no effective reserve of men for the Indian Army to meet quickly and systematically the losses of war; the reserves of clothing, equipment, munitions and medical stores were wholly inadequate. Under the severe test of a prolonged war, these defects became but too evident; and it was clear that a trained reserve must be a part of the organization of the army in India, and that it should not only be provided with such modern equipment as the Great War had shown to be necessary, but should also have adequate reserves of stores and munitions of all kinds. Throughout the Great War, India had paid only for her normal army, the British Exchequer had provided all else; but the lives of many Indians had been sacrificed because essential equipment and supplies had been lacking, and, if the defects which the Great War had disclosed were not remedied, such sacrifices would be repeated were India to be called to defend herself against aggression.

India had, in fact, been attacked by Afghanistan in 1919. The Afghans had been repulsed; but, just as the Great War had been proved to be a test of Indian military administration, so the Afghan war proved to be a test of the frontier policy, and it reopened a controversy which had been dormant for some twenty years.

The genesis of the frontier policy, and the part played in it by Rawlinson's father, have been described in Chapter I. It will be remembered that Sir Henry Rawlinson disagreed in principle with what was known as the Lawrence policy of masterly inactivity. Lord Lawrence's frontier policy

had been that we should make the Indus our frontier, maintain the most friendly relations with Afghanistan, but avoid all commitments in the tangled mass of mountains which bordered on the North-West frontier of India—mountains peopled by wild and warlike tribes. The military corollary of this policy was that we should maintain strong forces on or near the Indus, ready to intervene promptly when necessary, and should be prepared to meet an invader as he began to emerge from the mountains, but should avoid becoming entangled in their defiles.

Towards the close of Lord Lawrence's viceroyalty, a new factor, which for the next forty years was to be the dominating factor, entered the problem. In 1868, Russia occupied Samarkand, and began that advance towards India which, continued without haste but without rest, brought her to the frontiers of Afghanistan. It was this occupation by Russia of Samarkand which, together with the knowledge acquired by him while in Persia of Russia's designs on Central Asia, had caused Sir Henry Rawlinson to write his memorandum of 1868. In that memorandum he had, besides advocating an alliance with the Amir, pleaded for the permanent occupation of Quetta, as a first step to the establishment of our influence beyond the borders. Lawrence dissented from Rawlinson's programme, and a controversy started in which, fifty-three years later, the son of one of its originators became a protagonist on behalf of a modern development of his father's policy.

Until 1876 the Lawrence policy held the field, but in that year Lord Lytton was appointed Viceroy, with a mission from Lord Beaconsfield's Government to apply vigorously the forward policy. Quetta was occupied, and became eventually one of the most important military stations in India; while, under the vigorous and successful administration of Sir Robert Sandeman, Baluchistan was pacified and absorbed. In 1878 an attempt to complete the Rawlinson policy by sending a mission to Kabul was resisted by the Amir, and was the immediate cause of the second Afghan war. By the Treaty of Gandamak in May, 1879, not only did we establish a permanent mission at Kabul and supervise the foreign relations of Afghanistan, but we

assumed control of the frontier tribesman and the guardianship of the Khyber Pass. We had definitely crossed the Indus at all points, and the forward policy seemed to have triumphed. But, in September, 1879, that policy received a severe blow when Sir Louis Cavagnari, our envoy at Kabul, and his suite were murdered. There followed a period of compromise. It was too late to go back, there were doubts as to the expediency of advance. Kandahar, which we had occupied, was handed back to Afghanistan in 1881, despite the energetic protests of Sir Frederick Roberts, as he then was. The Amir's subsidy was increased, but our relations with the frontier tribes, and even the extent of the frontier territory for which we were nominally responsible, remained undefined.

The controversy between Roberts and Wolseley as to the best military policy for the defence of India has already been described. That controversy was at its height just at the time when young Rawlinson first came to army head-quarters in India, and his many conversations with his chief on the development of the problem served naturally to strengthen the views he had received from his father. One result of the division of opinion between the two chief military experts of the day was that the economists, faced with a grave problem of their own, found little difficulty in setting one view against the other, and in adopting neither.

In 1888, when Lord Lansdowne became Viceroy, with Lord Roberts as his Commander-in-Chief, the forward policy received a new fillip. In 1893, Sir Mortimer Durand's skilful diplomacy resulted in a definition of the boundary between Afghanistan and India. Proposals for real control and pacification of the frontier tribes, the construction of strategic railways towards, and of roads within, the mountain zone, were advanced and strenuously advocated. These measures would cost money—a great deal of money—and simultaneously the fall in the value of silver produced a serious financial crisis in India. The rupee, which in 1873 had been worth two shillings, fell in 1890 to one and fourpence. Economy was essential. The result was a half-forward policy, which united most of the defects of the

Lawrence and Lytton policies, and contained few of the merits of either. Some railways were pushed forward, some roads were built, some forts established and garrisoned in tribal territory. Sufficient, indeed, of all these to arouse the suspicions of the Amir, but insufficient to enable us to dominate the tribesmen. These, when times were hard or their spirits high, raided impartially both India and Afghanistan. In the latter case, the Amir, with some justice, held us responsible; in the former, we generally suspected Kabul. The consequence of this state of affairs was that we were continually engaged in small but costly punitive expeditions, which in no way advanced a permanent settlement. At length, in 1897, the whole frontier blazed in revolt, our forts were attacked, and many of them captured, and India became involved in military operations on a greater scale than she had had to undertake at any time since the Mutiny. Some 70,000 men were eventually mobilized; and the collection of the immense number of animals then necessary for the transport of our forces into the mountains, required months of laborious preparation. The Tirah campaign killed the half-forward policy.

The next stage in the development of the problem of the defence of India was a return by Lord Curzon, in 1899, to the general principles of the Lawrence policy, with such modifications as the changes which had taken place since 1869 made indispensable. Briefly, the Curzon policy was to avoid locking up regular garrisons in fortified positions within the frontier tribal zone; to employ there a militia raised from the tribesmen for such protection as was necessary; and to maintain on the administrative frontier of India movable columns of regular troops in a far greater state of readiness for immediate action than had hitherto prevailed. The success of this policy was made easier by the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, which removed the fear of Russian aggression—till then the dominant factor—and it undoubtedly was the means of producing a greater appearance of quiet on the frontier than had prevailed at any time since the birth of the controversy. But this appearance was deceptive. It was, in part, due to the exhaustion of the tribes after their experi-

ences in 1897-98. It was, in part, due to the fact that there was on the throne of Kabul a strong Amir, friendly to us, who gave the mountaineers of the frontier no encouragement. Despite this, however, there were constant minor disturbances, notably in Waziristan. These were dealt with by a method which was termed, "blockade," or "the close border policy," a process, which, accompanied occasionally by minor punitive expeditions, consisted in the main of cutting the enemy tribesmen off from communication with the plains, and so depriving them of those necessaries which their barren hills could not produce.

This policy was no real solution of the problem of the North-West frontier. It kept the frontiersmen in a state of latent unrest and dissatisfaction, which was certain to break out into open disturbance when a suitable opportunity came. The Great War provided that opportunity, though, fortunately for us, the tribesmen were slow to avail themselves of it. Our anxieties during the years 1914–18 were sufficient to expose both the weakness of the Curzon policy, and the danger of having warlike tribes on our frontiers under little control in times when all our attention and energies were required elsewhere. The general unrest which followed the Armistice, skilfully fomented by the agents of Moscow and Angora, culminated in February, 1919, in a declaration by the young Amir Amanullah that Afghanistan was a free and independent kingdom, a declaration which he followed by an unprovoked attack upon us. That attack was repulsed without much difficulty; but it was followed by a serious rising of the Mahsuds, which necessitated an expedition into Waziristan, where military operations were still in progress at the time of Lord Rawlinson's arrival in India.

The action of the Amir had destroyed all our treaties with his predecessors, and incidentally had thrown frontier policy once more into the melting-pot. Russia had ceased, for the time, to be a military menace to India. The menace was now of another kind, and it was highly important to prevent the influence of Soviet agents in Kabul, and amongst the frontier tribes, from becoming predominant. The experience, learned in the Great War, of the possibilities of

motor vehicles, both as military weapons and as means of supply, and the development of aircraft, had altered the military conditions, and reinforced the arguments in favour of the construction of roads in tribal territory connecting a chain of permanent posts. But our relations with Afghanistan were of greater importance than our relations with the tribes. The Amir, revelling in his new-found independence, was already flirting with the republics of Russia and Turkey, and there were statesmen both in India and at home who believed that signs of our intention to occupy the frontier permanently might well turn him away from us. A treaty with Afghanistan was a necessary prelude to a new frontier policy.

Again, the construction of roads, and the establishment of permanent stations on the frontier, would be expensive; and India was once more in the throes of a financial crisis, brought about mainly by the same cause as before—the depreciation of the value of silver. The financiers were loath to incur present expenditure on a promise, which might never be fulfilled, of future economies. Thus the old problems of 1868 were reappearing in a new dress, and Rawlinson, the son, found himself called upon, on his arrival in India, to answer many of the questions which Rawlinson, the father, had raised more than fifty years before.

If the equipment and training of the army in India in the light of the experience of the Great War, and the determination of frontier policy, were the main tasks confronting the new Commander-in-Chief, there were, besides, a host of administrative difficulties which clamoured for adjustment. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, and the new status which India had won for herself by her efforts in the Great War, had their reactions upon the army. A corollary of the demand for a greater share in the civil administration was the demand for a share in the framing of military policy, of an improvement in the status of Indian officers, and for the "Indianization" of at least a portion of the army. Just before Rawlinson left England, a committee, under the presidency of Lord Esher, formed to inquire into the administration and organization of the army in India with

special reference to post-bellum conditions, had sent in its report. While this report was of great assistance to Rawlinson, the task of applying its recommendations was no easy one. The committee had agreed unanimously that the Commander-in-Chief alone should have the right to offer military advice to the Government of India, and that he should have no military colleague upon the Executive Council. At the same time, it found that the burden of work upon the Commander-in-Chief had, in the past, been too heavy, and it proposed ways of lightening the burden; though, upon these, there were both majority and minority reports. It also made important recommendations for the improvement of the pay, housing and clothing of the Indian officer and soldier. The tasks which awaited Rawlinson may be summed up as:

(1) A settlement of the fifty-years-old controversy on frontier policy.
(2) A settlement of the problem of the relations of the Commander-in-Chief to the Government of India.
(3) The organization, training and equipment of the army in India in accordance with modern requirements.
(4) The provision of reserves of men and material.
(5) The improvement in the status and conditions of service of the Indian officer and soldier.

This would have been a sufficiently formidable programme in normal times, but the times were far from normal. Every item in the programme would cost money, and, in the existing financial situation of India, retrenchment was of prime importance. Political reform had made it difficult for the Government of India to dictate to the people what it held to be for their good. The task of the soldier, who sought a change of policy, no longer ended when he had persuaded a number of British officials to agree with him. He and they had to endeavour to carry with him the newly-created Indian legislatures, which were without experience of the requirements of defence. The new political conditions and the state of the Treasury put the imposition of fresh taxation out of court. It was even

essential that the cost of the army should be diminished, if the budget was to be balanced. In such circumstances, a considerable reduction in the strength of the army was the only way to provide economies, and to obtain the wherewithal to pay for improvements which would increase efficiency. Yet the frontier tribesmen were better armed, and had more ammunition, than at any previous period of their history. Soviet propaganda and the agitation led by Gandhi and the Ali brothers were provoking internal unrest in India, which at any moment might flame into disturbances such as had recently occurred in Amritsar. Of even greater importance was the general state of ferment in the Mohammedan world. The Treaty of Sèvres with Turkey was in a state of suspense. Kemal Pasha had re-created an effective Turkish army, and had rallied Turkish sentiment to resist the designs of Greece in Anatolia. Until the outcome of that adventure could be foreseen, and our relations with the Turks be determined, the situation both in India and in Iraq was pregnant with dangers. What reduction could, in these circumstances, be made with safety?

Rawlinson was, then, confronted with problems more complex, more fraught with possibilities of good or evil for India, than had faced his two great predecessors in modern times—Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener. He was fully conscious that he would need firmness of purpose, breadth of view and consummate tact, to solve them. He took with him three great assets. His interest in his task was keen and vital, his military experience and reputation had attracted to his service a body of men of proved merit—not for many years had Army head-quarters in India been so well equipped—and lastly a great deal of invaluable spade-work had been accomplished by his predecessor, Sir Charles Monro.

During the summer of 1920, when it became probable that he would be appointed Commander-in-Chief in India, Rawlinson was at pains to keep himself informed of the latest developments in that country, and of what his predecessor had done and was preparing. Sir Charles Monro had been the chief agent in the expansion of the Indian

Army, which, begun in 1916, was a highly important contribution to the conquest of Mesopotamia and of Palestine. Upon him had fallen the task of reducing the army to a peace establishment, and of preparing a new military policy. Sir Charles had worked out plans for a new distribution of the commands in India, which would relieve the congestion of work at Army head-quarters. These plans, known as "the four command scheme," will be described later. He had also worked out in detail plans for the permanent occupation of Waziristan, and had succeeded in winning the cordial support of the General Staff at home for both proposals. Thus, in two of the major problems of the defence of India, Rawlinson had not to originate a policy, but to win the approval of the Viceroy's Council for, and to find ways and means of applying, policies already formulated. He was very conscious that our policy in India could not, or, at least, should not, be treated without regard to our policy in the East generally. "I can quite understand," he wrote to a correspondent in India, in June, 1920, "the difficulties with which you are confronted because you cannot get the Home Government to formulate a policy. The fact is they have no Indian policy. Veniselos has won Lloyd George and Clemenceau to consent to his enterprises in Anatolia. The Greeks talk of sending large forces to bring Mustapha Kemal to terms, but there is not the slightest chance of their succeeding in this. The Treaty of Sèvres is an impossible document. There is no prospect of the Turks accepting it, and, even if they did so in appearance, they would endeavour to evade most of its terms, and would eventually resist many of them. It seems to me madness to endeavour to enforce this treaty on a recalcitrant Turk, when we have no means of compelling his acceptance. The result will be, for us, a lamentable loss of prestige, if not worse. What I fear most is that these schemes of Venisclos may drag us into another war with Turkey, for which we are entirely unprepared. The effect of this upon Afghanistan, upon the frontier tribes, and upon the Mohammedan population of India, would be disastrous. Montagu[1] sees this, but he has not enough

[1] The Right Hon. E. Montagu, then Secretary of State for India.

influence with the Prime Minister, who has unbounded faith in Veniselos, to enforce his views.

"I have been down to Wool to see the new tank, and am much impressed by it. It is a great improvement on the tank we had on August 8, and will go on improving. It will be invaluable in India. The tank enthusiasts spoil their case by overstatement, but they are on the right lines. We must also have more aircraft for India. Until I can go into military finance, it is impossible to say what savings we can make to provide India with modern equipment, but it must be done. If we can do this, and make the training of the Indian army progressive and up to date, there should be no difficulty in attracting good men to India.

"People here are frightened of this talk of 'Indianization,' and old officers say they won't send their sons out to serve under natives. I agree that the new system must be allowed to take its course, but it will want very careful watching and cannot be hurried. The only way to begin is to have certain regiments with native officers only. The question is, are we going to find in the future a reasonable number of Pertabs[1] and Ranjis to act as leaders?"

Rawlinson sailed from England with this preliminary survey of his task in his mind, and had his first sight of his new command when he arrived at Aden in mid-November. "We have spent a frightful amount of money in Aden, most of which seems to me to have been wasted. We have built permanent stone barracks in the crater, and spent a vast deal in fortifications which have but limited value. So do we chuck away money in superfluities, and have none when we need it for essentials. The land defence of Aden is a simple matter, and the sea defence mainly a naval question. As long as we command the Indian Ocean, Aden is in no danger; and if we don't, I can't see that it is of any use to us. It is a thoroughly bad station for a British battalion, which is bound to deteriorate here. I would evacuate the hinterland. We have a battalion at Hodeida; what on earth for? It only costs money and lives, and we get no adequate return. I would confine ourselves to the promontory, and reduce the garrison to

[1] The late Maharajah, Sir Pertab Singh, of Jodhpur.

a battalion of native troops, a company of sappers, and some garrison artillery for the forts. England ought to take it over and pay for it, and then there would be some real economy. As a coaling station, Aden is of more use to the Empire generally than it is to India, and the most that India should be asked to pay is a small contribution towards the cost."[1]

After the usual ceremonies attending the arrival of a Commander-in-Chief, Rawlinson reached Delhi at the end of November, and was at once plunged into heavy work. He lost no time in picking up the threads, and on December 18, he wrote: "My job is even more complicated and difficult than I had imagined. Hailey[2] (the Financial Member of Council) has an even stiffer job. He cannot balance his budget, and it looks as if the exchange will get worse. In the present state of India any big increase of taxation would be dangerous, yet money must be found somehow. I have told Hailey that I am out to help him all I can, but that security must come first. To do the minimum of what is necessary on the frontier—in army reorganization, in the provision of equipment and the introduction of the Esher reforms—we require seventy-five crores[3] for the army. In 1913–14 the army cost twenty-nine and a half crores. With the new scales of pay, the annual cost of a British soldier will have risen from one thousand rupees before the war, to two thousand five hundred, and of an Indian soldier, from three hundred rupees to six hundred and fifty. The average cost of a British officer has gone up by about four thousand rupees a year, and yet, owing to the fall in the exchange and the rise in the cost of living, his expenses have increased more than proportionately, and it is becoming difficult to keep good men out here. I am shocked to find we have nearly two thousand officers in excess of requirements. They were taken on when they were wanted, during the war, and we cannot simply kick them out; but how to get fair treatment for them in the present state of finances is going to be a thorny task. With

[1] Since Lord Rawlinson's death, Great Britain has assumed charge of Aden.

[2] Sir Malcolm Hailey, K.C.B.

[3] A crore of rupees = 100 lakhs or 10,000,000 rupees. Its approximate value in sterling, in 1922, was £666,000.

all this immense increase in cost, India is not really getting value for her money, owing to defective organization, but I cannot reorganize without spending money. Any considerable sum can only be saved by reducing the military establishments; but I told the Viceroy,[1] when I had a long talk with him the other day, that I could not, in the present state of affairs, agree to any sweeping reduction. He said he quite understood. He is a white man, and I am sure we shall get on well. This Waziri business is going to be troublesome. The Wana expedition started on the 16th, and so far they have only had four men wounded by snipers. But we hear that the Haji from Afghanistan has, by distributing money and ammunition, persuaded the tribesmen to put up a fight."

On December 30, Rawlinson had his first meeting with the Defence Committee, and reopened the battle of the frontier. He was at once to experience the same difficulties as had confronted Lord Roberts forty years ago. There was again a division of opinion amongst military experts. The policy which Rawlinson supported was the permanent occupation of Waziristan, as a step towards the permanent occupation and pacification of the whole frontier from the Khyber to the Khojak pass. This programme was to be carried out by stages in Waziristan; the first stage being the construction of military roads, and the establishment of a permanent garrison at Razmak in the heart of Waziristan. The advocates of this policy maintained that the development of mechanical transport, once the roads were constructed, would allow of the tribesmen being controlled far more economically than was possible under the old system, which had produced an interminable series of small military expeditions, costly in themselves, and bringing no permanent results. They also argued that by opening up the frontier the tribesmen would be gradually civilized, and find more profitable occupations than the border raids which were their chief industry between seed-time and harvest. Finally, it was urged that we now had the means of removing the standing menace which the unruly tribes constituted in the event of any future trouble with Afghanistan.

[1] Lord Chelmsford.

While responsible military opinion was unanimously in favour of this policy, there were unofficial military experts who were insistent that it was strategically unsound to lock up regular garrisons in Waziristan—a country from which there were no issues suitable for a military advance into Afghanistan; that, so far from these garrisons immobilizing the Waziris and Mahsuds, they would command respect just as far as their guns would carry, and no farther, and would, in fact, themselves be immobilized. Rawlinson's policy was dubbed by its opponents a return to the half-forward policy, which had proved in 1897 to be a failure. As in the seventies of the last century, so, in 1921, the economists were not slow to take advantage of these differences. After his meeting with the Defence Committee, Rawlinson wrote: "We were at it hammer and tongs to-day, over frontier policy. Hailey trotted out all the old arguments; I don't blame him, poor chap. He has to fight to save every rupee these days. But I was in a very strong position. The memories of recent events on the frontier are still fresh, and no one who went through the anxieties of last year wants to have them repeated. The result was that I had the support of the Viceroy and of the Political Department, and I have the General Staff at home at my back. With this I won approval in principle of the forward policy. It is a long step from the approval in principle to the approval of definite measures, but it is something. Of course, the first thing to do is to get a treaty with the Amir, otherwise everything that we do on the frontier will be a cause of trouble in Kabul. The Government at home is inclined to object to a treaty unless the Amir throws over the Soviet. I am for the treaty first, and weaning him from the Soviet afterwards. Once we have definite relations with him, he will soon find out which side his bread is buttered.

"There is a great deal of unrest amongst the Sikhs of the Punjab, and the Punjab Government is going to proclaim all Sikh districts, so as to control seditious meetings. The Viceroy suggested that I should collect some representative members of both Houses of the Legislature and give them a lecture on the defence of India, and this I will

gladly do. I am getting the hang of things, and beginning to see the difficulties I am up against. It is desperately interesting. The work is hard, but I enjoy it. With an hour's tennis or polo in the evenings and a ride before breakfast, I keep very fit, and do not feel the long hours."

Having persuaded the Defence Committee to agree to the forward policy in principle, Rawlinson took the first opportunity after the Christmas holidays to have a look at the frontier. During this trip he visited the Samana range: "We took Donald, the Commissioner, with us, as he knows every inch of the ground. From Fort Lockhart he pointed out to us the Sampagha pass, Tirah and the Safhed Koh range. On the way up we saw the Dargai ridge. I was most interested in seeing these historic places. The view from Fort Lockhart is one of the finest I have ever seen in my life. The grandeur of nature on so vast a scale takes one's breath away. I am quite certain that the permanent occupation of the Kurram Valley is the right solution for this part of the frontier, and will be a real economy in the end. It will divide the Waziri group of tribesmen from the Afridi group. The main problem is where to put the cantonment for the Kurram brigade, and this is no easy matter. A mistake at the beginning may mean the waste of a lot of money, and damn the whole forward policy, which the economists—who never look beyond the next budget—view none too favourably as it is. I have been very struck with the type of man I find on the frontier, both British and Indian. The spice of adventure attracts the right sort, and that is a healthy sign. The general atmosphere up here is quiet and healthy. There is no friction and there are no duds among the British officers. I inspected the Kurram militia, about 2,500 strong. A very fine body of men, with good officers, five of them British. The subadar-major is an Afridi, the only Afridi in the regiment, and a real man."

On his return to Delhi he found that the battle round the budget was approaching a crisis.

"*January 7*, 1921.—With great difficulty I had cut my military estimates down from 75 crores to 65, and took it to the Viceroy's Council. I got badly beaten, and was told

to get it down to 60 crores; which can only be done by reducing the British troops by two cavalry regiments, one brigade of artillery, and five battalions of infantry. I had to tell the Council that I could not take the responsibility for this reduction, and am now considering my resignation. It is very disappointing, and very difficult to decide what is right. The Government of India has to meet the Legislative Assembly next month and do all that is possible to reconcile it to military expenditure. If I resign now, it will produce a crisis, make bad feeling in the army and greatly increase the Viceroy's difficulties, which I am loath to do. I am prepared to go as far as possible, compatible with reasonable prudence, in the direction of economy, but these reductions are too much. We can do a good deal when we get a proper supply of tanks, armoured-cars and aeroplanes, out here, but till then I must stick my toes in. I shall not decide how to act until I have had another talk with Jacob[1] and Archie and have seen the Viceroy."

"*January 8.*—After thinking it over most of the night, I decided that I would put in a dissenting minute, but would not resign on yesterday's decision of the Council. I went to the Viceroy in the afternoon and he asked me to withdraw my dissenting minute, which I said I could not do unless he let me keep the two British cavalry regiments and four of the five battalions of British infantry until things got better. So there the matter stands."

"*January 14.*—It is a great relief to me to find that I was right in the course I have taken. A cable has come from Montagu urging all the arguments I have put forward, and adding that, if we reduced the British garrison of India now, there would be no chance of raising a loan in the City of London. This is a great reinforcement, and I am sure we shall get some workable solution. Meantime, good has come out of evil, for, with everyone's thoughts centred on the budget, I have got through the four command scheme with surprising ease."

Getting the scheme approved by Council was only the first step. The introduction and establishment of the four

[1] Field-Marshal Sir Claud Jacob, then Chief of the General Staff in India. Major-General Sir Archibald Montgomery was Deputy Chief.

command system occupied a great deal of Rawlinson's time throughout 1921. The congestion of work at Army head-quarters, under the old system, had attracted the attention of the Mesopotamian Commission, as well as of Lord Esher's Committee. It was, indeed, both flagrant and vexatious. Not only were the officials at head-quarters prevented, by the mass of detail with which they had to deal, from giving sufficient time and thought to broad questions of policy, but a deal of unnecessary friction was caused by the interminable delays and correspondence resulting from the reference of some trivial matters of finance and administration to Delhi or to Simla. The principles of an organization of the army in India into four commands—which should comprise all the troops, except the Burma division; the Aden brigade, since transferred to the Royal Air Force; and, temporarily, Waziristan—had been supported by the War Office before Rawlinson sailed. It remained for him to win the approval, first of the Viceroy's Council, then of the India Office, and finally to apply the scheme. A firm believer in the principle of decentralization, he set to work *con amore* to create the new commands; to endow the commanders with financial and administrative responsibility; and to equip them with adequate administrative staffs, which they had never before possessed. The effect of these changes upon the congestion at head-quarters was soon apparent, and before very long it began to produce increased efficiency and economy in the commands.

After a long discussion in and out of Council on the reduction of the British garrison, an agreement was eventually reached, on the understanding that no British troops should, in any case, be sent home till the autumn, and that, in the interval, the military requirements of India should be thoroughly reviewed by a committee, with Rawlinson as its chairman.

Before all this was finally settled, the Duke of Connaught arrived, bearing a message from the King on the opening of the Legislative Assembly. Of his visit, Rawlinson wrote, on February 2:

"During H.R.H.'s visit to Delhi and Rawal-Pindi (at

the latter place he was my guest) it has been impossible to find time to write up my diary. The visit has been a complete success, and there were no untoward incidents; though Gandhi came to Delhi and, by holding meetings of his own, did something to reduce the number who would otherwise have lined the streets to welcome the Duke. The great coup which he brought off was his personal appeal at the opening of the Council of State and of the Legislative Assembly. After delivering the King's message, and declaring the chamber open, he made a most moving appeal, as an old man, to all parties to be considerate and to work in harmony. His address had a great effect upon all, save the most extreme, whom nothing will influence. The whole atmosphere has greatly improved in consequence. We owe the Duke a great debt of gratitude. All the ceremonies were as good as India can make them, which is saying much. The Princes in their best pearls and diamonds were a glorious sight at the State Ball. The parades at Pindi were all good, too; but the most interesting show was an entertainment arranged by the Indian officers on the race-course; there must have been over a thousand of them, and some very fine fellows, covered with frontier medals, among them. I was tackled by a jirga of splendid old Afridi officers, who besought me to find employment for their young men. They said half the trouble on the frontier was due to unemployment, and I believe them. That is a strong point for the forward policy; the old game of shutting them into their mountains simply invites them to try to burst out when times are hard."

Lord Chelmsford's term of office drew to a close, and on April 2, Lord Reading landed at Bombay. As is usual at such times, official India was agog to know the new Viceroy's policy. Were Gandhi and the Ali brothers to be arrested? On what terms would we accept a treaty with Afghanistan? What was to be our frontier policy? These were the questions everyone was asking. The last two particularly concerned Rawlinson and, after a trip to Bombay to speed the parting and welcome the new ruler, he went off to Baluchistan and Waziristan, that he might

be fully seized of the situation on what was then the most difficult part of the frontier.

A strenuous three weeks began with a visit to Quetta. "I was greatly struck with the growth of Quetta. It is huge, and one of the finest, if not the finest, military stations in India. Even so, it ought to be bigger, for I find that the Staff College is very short of houses for married officers. The college is tip-top, and Louis Vaughan[1] runs it very well; but it is a pity it was placed in what must necessarily be an expensive station. It is interesting to recall the fact that Quetta is not yet fifty years old, and that my father's proposals for its occupation met with just as much opposition as do mine for the occupation of Waziristan. Perhaps I may be the founder of another Quetta at Razmak."

At the end of his tour, Rawlinson wrote:

"I have been deeply interested in all I have seen in Waziristan. The situation there is better than I had expected to find it. Matheson[2] is very keen, and knows his job thoroughly. The troops like him, and are fit, though a good many of the officers and men look rather fine drawn. Still, affairs here are not satisfactory, and won't be till we have a settled policy. We are at war, and one cannot go beyond the limits of the piquets without an escort. This cannot continue. It must either get better or worse. We ought either to proclaim our definite intention of permanent occupation, or clear out. I was going to make the announcement, which has been approved by the Secretary of State, that we would stay; but I was stopped by a wire from Simla, because of the critical state of our negotiations with Kabul. They seem to think that the Amir will be irritated if we say we are going to remain at Ladha. Meanwhile, Waziristan is wasting from forty to fifty lakhs a month beyond what has been provided in the budget, and this makes my chance of getting anything for necessary reforms smaller than ever. I must see the Viceroy as soon as possible, and find out what his views about Afghanistan are. I am all for a treaty of some sort, because I am certain that the Amir will find that the pleasures of freedom

[1] Major-General Sir Louis Vaughan, K.B.E.
[2] Major-General Sir Torquil Matheson, K.C.B

to negotiate with the Bolshies will begin to pall, and will realize that we have ten times as much to offer him as they have."

On his return to Simla, he had his talk with the Viceroy. "Reading has begun well. He evidently means to be master in his own house, and I am sure he and I will get on well together. He pleased me by saying that security must take precedence of finance, and I told him that I would do my utmost to save every possible rupee. I pointed out to him that if we went to war with Afghanistan and eventually gave the Amir a good beating, occupying Kabul, it would cost us one hundred crores and many lives, and we would really be no nearer a solution of the Afghan problem, or of the settlement of the North-West frontier. It would, therefore, pay us to give the Amir a much larger subsidy than we contemplated now, in order to get a treaty, even if we took the risk of his maintaining his treaty with the Bolsheviks and getting in arms surreptitiously. We also had a long talk about the internal situation, and the question of arresting the Ali brothers. These are interesting times, for within the next few weeks we shall know how we stand at Kabul and with the Swarajists. If both go wrong, we shall be in for a hard time, and it will mean disturbances all over India and war all along the frontier, if not with Afghanistan as well. If both go right, it will be a big feather in the Viceroy's cap, for it will be his personality that has brought it about, and the prestige which he will gain will go a long way towards securing peace for many years."

The polo week at Simla made a pleasant break in these strenuous discussions. "Snowdon"[1] entered a team in which Rawlinson played. "We beat Hodgson's Horse and Army Head-quarters pretty easily, but in the final we had a very stiff game with the Viceroy's staff, on which I had a bet of a rupee with the Viceroy. We were three all when the bell rang at the end of the last chucker, but I managed to hit the winning goal before the umpire blew his whistle, and so won the match and the tournament. It was a record, for no Commander-in-Chief has ever played in a tourna-

[1] The Commander-in-Chief's house at Simla.

ment in his own team and led them to victory. The Viceroy has taken back the rupee to have it framed for me."

The chairmanship of the committee on India's military requirements took up a great deal of valuable time during the summer. Rawlinson solved the problem of fitting in the demands of social life at Simla and Delhi with strenuous work, by adopting a system. He was up every morning at 7 a.m., and in bed every night at 11 p.m. As regularly he took his early morning ride, and an hour after tea for polo or tennis. From 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. he was ready for society, the rest of the day was given to work.

At the beginning of July he wrote: "Simla has been very gay for the past fortnight—dances of sorts almost every night—but I have refused to go out at night, except, of course, to Viceregal Lodge. I am told I have given offence by refusing to dine with members of Council. I am sorry, but I cannot help it. I cannot sit up all night, and do my work all day. I have made up my mind that the Commander-in-Chief has not more work thrown at him than a man can stand, if he works on a system, and when we get the four commands going properly, there will be less to do at head-quarters. I have, therefore, decided to oppose the proposal to have a civil army member of Council.[1] If the matter is pressed, I shall resign; but I do not think it will come to that."

He was an excellent host, who took real pleasure and gave close attention to the entertainment of his guests. He was particularly proud of the success of a big ball which he and Lady Rawlinson gave at "Snowdon" in aid of Lord Haig's Fund. But whether it was a house party, a formal dinner or ball, at 11 p.m. he said to his guests: "I hope you will stay and enjoy yourselves as long as possible. I am going to bed."

During the summer Rawlinson had a talk with Mulavire, Gandhi's right-hand man: "He is an interesting fellow, a visionary and idealist; but he has not considered the practical problems of the future of India, and I asked him a few straight questions. Can India really afford to have Swaraj within the next ten years? What she wants most

[1] This was the recommendation of the majority report of the Esher Commission.

LORD RAWLINSON AND HIS POLO TEAM, SIMLA, 1921

is capital and business brains, and she won't get either unless she has the confidence of the City of London. Even now she cannot raise a loan, and won't be able to do so as long as the present agitation lasts. Then, as regards the problems of defence: how long will it take to Indianize the army? India may be able, eventually, to protect her frontiers with fewer British regiments; but how soon can she look to doing without British troops and British officers for Indian regiments? It will take her thirty years to breed and train a class which is capable of leading her troops. In the interval, if they hurry things, British officers will not come to India. Already they are beginning to hesitate at the mere prospect of Swaraj. Of course, he was unconvinced; but I gave him something to think about, and showed him that the prime function of the British troops in India was not to keep down the natives, but to defend India from aggression."

By the middle of July the report of the Military Requirements Committee was ready. "I have agreed to recommend the reduction of three British cavalry regiments and five British infantry regiments, when the internal conditions and the state of the frontier admits. This is rather faster than I had intended to go in the first instance; but I could not resist the pressure when it came to considering the fact that we had twenty-eight British, and only twenty-one Indian, battalions allotted for internal security. It was impossible to defend this proportion, which dates from the post-Mutiny days. Now that we have decided to trust the Indians and lead them to self-government, we cannot justify an army of occupation. I agreed to recommend the eventual institution of an Indian Woolwich and Sandhurst; but I told the native members of my committee that they were trying to go too fast. I am in favour of setting up military schools at Dehra Dun and Bangalore at once; but it would be a foolish waste to start a Sandhurst before a sufficient supply of young men of the right type is assured. We have had a long discussion on the future status of the Indian officer. The Council has settled that commissions in the Indian Territorial and Auxiliary forces are to be King's commissions, signed by the Viceroy. This

will mean that we shall have to follow suit in the Indian Regular Army, which opens up the whole question of the relations between the British and native officers. It is full of snags. If it is rushed, the supply of British officers will dry up long before India is in any degree ready to do without them. To my mind, the only solution is to begin by making some cavalry and infantry regiments wholly Indian. This will avoid the difficulty of making white officers serve under Indian officers, and will enable us to test the effect of the change. I must talk it all out with Jacob, whose judgment on these matters I find is very reliable. Personally, I fear the effect on the efficiency of the Indian army as a fighting machine. Will we ever get the young educated Indian to lead a charge of veteran Sikhs against a sangar held by Mahsuds, and, if he did so, would the Sikhs follow him? Will we ever get the sons of the landowners of the fighting races, who are brought up to despise the Babu, just as our feudal chiefs despised the clerk, sufficiently educated to be trusted with the lives of men in modern war? I told the Viceroy that it will take at least two, and probably three, generations to produce Indian officers of the right kind and in sufficient numbers, and he agreed."

The work of the committee on the military requirements of India completed, Rawlinson set off on his first tour of Southern India, during which he visited a number of the larger native states. "Here," he wrote, "is another problem which bristles with difficulties. How are we to fit the autocratic states into a democratized India? The government of some of the native states is deplorable, of others quite admirable. On the whole, we are steadily raising, without too much interference, the general level of their administration. I am averse to tightening the control of Simla, which the best of them will resist to the last, while the worst of them will intrigue with the Swarajists, and give them money, simply to annoy us. I am for encouraging the best of them in every possible way, and for trying to lead the others to copy them. We should leave their relations to the Legislative Assembly to work themselves out. A benevolent autocracy is by far the best form

of government for a great part of India. Take the case of Mysore, which I have just visited. We put the present reigning family on the throne when Lord Harris defeated Tippoo Sahib and captured Seringapatam in 1799. Since then that family has fulfilled its trust most satisfactorily, and nothing could be better than the way Mysore is managed to-day. The Maharajah takes a deep interest in the welfare of his subjects, looks after a great part of the administration himself, and is deservedly popular with all who come into contact with him. It would be hard to improve on the present government of Mysore, and easy to make it worse. We have no legitimate reason for forcing a change on the state. I understand that the present Maharajah has refused to join the Council of the Princes, because he thinks it *infra dig.* to associate with other reigning princes of less dignity. We may be able to get over this difficulty by tactfully appealing to him and other princes in like case, to put their experience at the service of India as a whole; but it will do no good to attempt to drive them."

During Rawlinson's tour the Moplah rebellion broke out. On returning to Simla in mid-September, he wrote: "This Moplah business is serious. Jock Stuart[1] has the local situation well in hand, but it is eating up money, and the deficit will be bigger than ever. Besides, it is a symptom and a dangerous one. I said, before I came out here, that we should have to pay for our delay in settling with Turkey. Of the many stupid things which we have done in the last few years, this business of backing the Greeks in Asia Minor is one of the stupidest. I know that Reading made it quite clear to the Cabinet what the effect in India would be; but they would not listen to him, and if they are not careful, they will simply throw the Mohammedans into the arms of the Swarajists. The Moplahs are simple, ignorant people, easily worked on by agitators, to whom we make a present of a case for agitation. We ought never to touch the East without thinking out all possible reactions of a proposed policy. Yet it is hard to believe that the Cabinet can have had before them a balance-sheet showing the cost to us in Mohammedan unrest of keeping

[1] Major-General Sir John Burnett-Stuart, K.C.B.

Kemal out of Constantinople, which we cannot possibly keep ourselves."

Ten days' holiday—shooting and sketching in the hills beyond Simla—a tour to Ajmeer and Bhopal, and the preparation for the Prince of Wales's visit, filled in time until the middle of November, when the Prince landed in Bombay. "The Prince is in the best of health and spirits, as keen as mustard to try Indian polo and to have a run after a pig. But the disturbances which followed his arrival, worked up by Gandhi, have put a damper on his welcome, which was at first enthusiastic enough. When I took the Prince down to play polo in the afternoon, I found they had turned out two regiments of cavalry to line the route. Quite unnecessary, in my opinion. Two squadrons would have been more than enough. That is the sort of difficulty which arises from sending the Prince out at this time. The authorities dare not take any risks and they overdo it. The Prince is very sick at the amount of work his visit is throwing on the troops."

Soon after his return to Delhi, the welcome news arrived from Sir Henry Dobbs that the treaty with Afghanistan had been signed on November 22. In that week he wrote: "On the whole, the situation is better than I expected, a year ago, that it would be. We have got our treaty with the Amir and, except for money, the way is clear for a settlement of frontier policy. I shall have to fight like a tiger for this with the financiers, but I am sure I shall win. We have arrested the Ali brothers, and, though the Khalifat agitation continues, it tends to diminish. Gandhi has failed to influence the great majority of the educated classes, and the Prince's visit has been accompanied with no more disturbances. Attempts by the Bolshies and the Swarajists to undermine the loyalty of the Indian Army have met with little or no success. The feeling among the most moderate and most numerous section of the population that order must be maintained is growing. If only I could get some capital to spend on the reorganization of the army in general, and of the frontier in particular, I'm sure I could make India more secure than she has been at any time in my life, and at the

same time produce large eventual economies. But where is the money to come from? I have had the figures for the military budget before me this week and they are appalling. They were to the impossible total of 72 crores. Besides normal expenditure, the Moplah rebellion and operations in Waziristan cost nine crores; the disposal of my surplus officers, two crores; and the Esher Committee's recommendations, one and a half crores. The general budget will show a deficit of 30 crores. The only effective economy on the military side must come from the reduction of the British troops, the cost of whom is still rising. Whether we can do that or not depends upon India herself. If she will be peaceful, we can do a great deal. Peace and retrenchment are admirable cries; but you cannot have peace combined with agitation, and you cannot have retrenchment without peace."

CHAPTER XIV

THE DEFENCE OF INDIA: II. THE SOLUTION

TOWARDS the end of 1921, Rawlinson made an extensive tour of Burma, which he had not seen since he was in the country with Lord Roberts in 1888. "I have been greatly impressed with the development of Burma under British rule. Since I was in Rangoon, more than thirty years ago, the place has grown out of recognition. The rice and timber trade has more than doubled, and the discovery of oil has added an enormous and ever-increasing business. The Burma Oil Company has a pipe line 280 miles long to bring oil from the wells up-country to the refineries at Rangoon, which is now a very prosperous go-ahead port. The quays and warehouses have been multipled many times, and the whole river is full of shipping. The result of all this is that the value of land has risen to a high level, while the problems of defence are entirely different from what they were in 1887. Most of the old forts which we then erected are quite useless now, but their sites are very valuable. The military cantonments now occupy some of the best building sites in Rangoon, but, owing to the growth of the town around them, they are not suitable for soldiers any longer. We could make quite a lot of money by selling most of the land in military occupation; and gain in efficiency by having the soldiers in healthier places, where there are proper facilities for training. If the financiers would turn their attention to these matters, instead of trying to cut down what is really necessary for the safety of India, we should all benefit. However, I shall have to enlist their aid in this job, for, if I send a soldier to deal with the hard-headed Scots who are the heads of the business community in Rangoon, we shall not get full value for our property.

"Though I saw a great change in Rangoon, it is as nothing as compared with what has taken place in Mandalay. The whole of the interior of Thebaw's city, with the exception of the palace, has been cleared out, the native houses have been removed, and a new well-planned native quarter has been built elsewhere. In their stead there is now a spacious, healthy cantonment, with good barracks and bungalows. Thebaw's palace is—owing to the forethought of Lord Curzon, who provided a Government grant for the purpose—being carefully preserved as an ancient monument. The carving and gilt-work in the palace are as good as they were thirty years ago; the gardens are hardly changed and are kept in excellent order. The rockeries and artificial water, which were such striking features of the garden, still exist, and I found on the top of one of the rockeries the little summer-house in which I lived in 1887. I have a sketch of it in my old diary, and it was interesting to compare it again with the original. My visit to Burma has made me very proud of British administration. We have done marvels in little more than a generation. The political future of Burma is still being worked out. I imagine that it will take the form of a provincial legislature similar to those which already exist in India. There is a certain amount of agitation for Home Rule for Burma, but I don't think there is any real force behind it. Most of the intelligent Burmese with whom I talked realized that it is to their advantage to be linked to India for the defence of their ports and of the Chinese frontier, and that, commercially, they would lose by separation."

On his return to Delhi, in time to see the old year out, Rawlinson found that the internal situation had taken a distinct turn for the worse. "I was too optimistic last November. The Prince's visit to Calcutta was not a success, and Gandhi's non-co-operative movement is gaining ground. The arrest of Congress volunteers, carried out to avoid the risk of disturbances during the Prince's visit, has, in fact, increased the risk, and raised a howl from all parties that we are engaged in a campaign of repression designed to deprive India of her liberties.

Race hatred is increasing, and there have lately been far more incidents between natives and white men. Of course, all this puts back any question of reducing the British garrison; and that makes it more difficult than ever for me to get the frontier settled, which cannot be done without spending money."

A week later he wrote: "I have got my military budget through Council, and came out with 65·10 crores, which avoids the necessity of cutting down my fighting troops. They reduced the provision for Waziristan from 4·65 lakhs to 1·54, which cannot be done. However, I have got a committee of experts, with myself as chairman, to advise the Government on the risks it would be running if it adopts the reduced figure; and I have little doubt of being able to convince Council that, in this case, penny wise is pound foolish. Meantime, even at the present figure, after making every possible cut in expenditure and every possible increase in taxation, the general budget shows a deficit of 8 crores, which is not a pleasant figure to present to the Legislative Assembly in its present mood. We shall have a clash soon and be forced to arrest Gandhi, and what the effect of that will be I can't say."

From these troubles Rawlinson took a short rest by running down to Bikanir to shoot with the Maharajah. "His Highness took us to his shooting palace at Gujner, which is a charming place alongside a great tank. It is a really beautiful oasis in the midst of an interminable desert. His Highness was kindness itself; the shooting was marvellous, and I have had a most enjoyable two days' holiday. We got 6,450 sand-grouse with 18 guns in two days. I got 315 birds the first day and 325 the second, and I was only shooting moderately, about one bird to three cartridges. The birds began to come over about 8.30 a.m., and kept up in a continuous stream till 11.30 a.m., and for three hours each day we were hard at it, and my shoulder was pretty sore at the end of the second day. At any rate, I had no time to worry about Gandhi and Waziristan."

He got back to Delhi in time to make the final arrangements for the Prince's visit to the capital, and on February

21, 1922, he wrote: "The Prince's visit has gone off quite splendidly, which, after the fiasco at Calcutta, is a tremendous relief. He has worked very hard. At the People's Fair he was mobbed by about five or six thousand natives from the city, who surged round him, cheering him to the echo, salaaming and almost worshipping him. They overran the police, despite all the precautions, and it was a most moving sight to see the Prince riding through the mass of excited people, obviously all trying to show their devotion. He was perfectly delighted, as it is the first time he has really got into personal touch with the masses. His winning smile and extraordinarily attractive manner won the hearts of all, and the demonstration seems to me clear proof that, when there are no agitators or police to stand between the people and the King's son, their loyalty is unbounded.

"The Prince had another great success with a speech in Hindustani, which he learned by heart, to the 11th and 16th Rajputs, to whom he presented colours. The men were delighted and cheered him to the echo. He looks very well, but he confided to me that he goes to bed dog-tired every night."

A month later Rawlinson had made his speech in the Legislative Assembly on the budget, Gandhi had been arrested, and Mr. Montagu had resigned his position as Secretary of State. "India is certainly no easy country to govern nowadays," Rawlinson wrote of these events. "One never knows how she will take things. We arrested the Congress volunteers, most of whom were wild men or hot-headed youths, expecting that a demonstration of firmness would rally the moderates to us. Instead, our action inflamed them to passion and made things worse than ever. Now we have arrested Gandhi and looked for no end of trouble, and lo! the arrest has caused no trouble at all. Indeed, as soon as Gandhi was in prison, trade began to revive and large orders for British cloth were at once sent off by the merchants of Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay. The Finance Bill was passed in the Assembly, which threw out the Salt Tax and the Machinery Tax, so that we have a deficit of something over ten crores.

I was very favourably impressed with the way the Assembly took a very difficult financial situation. There were no silly demonstrations, such as walking out of the House—a procedure some of the extremists had talked of—and the House behaved in a way which shows that it has a real sense of its responsibilities. It has sized up the gas-bags surprisingly quickly, and knows the men worth listening to. The whole debate was conducted with commendable good humour and moderation. I gave them the plain facts about the defence of India; told them that I had effected every possible economy short of reducing the fighting troops, to which I could not agree as long as agitation lasted. I explained our Waziristan policy, and told them that peace and economy on the frontier would be better assured by permanent occupation of the Mahsud territory, and by constructing roads, than by any other means. All this they took very well; but I created something of a sensation by warning them against trying to go too fast with Indianization. There was a gasp when I said that, in my opinion, this would take several generations.

"Montagu has published our dispatch protesting against the policy of backing the Greeks in Asia Minor, and the fat is in the fire, for L.G. won't stand any opposition to the dreams of his friend Veniselos. Montagu is quite right to do his best to put the drag on, but his demonstration is too late to do any good; the mischief is done. We have got a long row to hoe before we get a settlement in the Near East, which we might have had for the asking in 1919. Anyway, my budget is through without any reduction of fighting troops, and though I shall have another dog-fight next year, I may be thankful."

To celebrate the passing of the budget, Rawlinson went off on a short shooting holiday to Gwalior. "I inspected the State troops on March 25. The Mahrattas are proud of their military traditions, and Scindia is a keen soldier. He is also an excellent administrator, and his state is progressive and well run. He looks after most of the departments himself. Incidentally, he knows all that is to be known about tiger-shooting, and on the 26th he took us out about seventy miles from Gwalior, by a narrow-gauge

railway, to camp where we breakfasted. He posted the guns on the edge of a rocky nullah and, after waiting a short time, we heard a stone fall. Scindia at once recognized that this was tiger, and ran up the nullah along the rocks, just in time to see 'stripes' trying to break out up the rocks. He put a couple of bullets above him, and turned him back towards the guns. I saw him cantering along the opposite side of the nullah, about one hundred yards away, and missed him, both barrels; Otto[1] also missed him. Then, as he was scrambling up the opposite bank, I got him in the neck with my third shot, and brought him head over heels down the rocks. No sooner was this excitement over, than another tiger came along the bottom of the nullah; and, before I could see him, Otto had put a bullet into his shoulder. He then bounded into view, and between us we finished him off. Two tigers before 9.30 a.m."

Before settling down for the summer at Simla, Rawlinson made another trip to the frontier, during which he introduced Lord Reading to the Khyber Pass. "The Viceroy was much impressed. We went up Mount Pisgah, and had a view of the Jalalabad valley, but there were clouds over most of the snow peaks. Maffey had collected all the Afridi Mahliks at Landi Kotal and Jamrud to meet the Viceroy, who said he had never seen such a picturesque looking set of wild hillmen. Wild they are, but all is at present peaceful, though they keep a keen eye on our policy. They thanked the Viceroy profusely for having fought for the cause of the Moslems in the Turkish controversy, which shows that they keep abreast of the times. The demand of the Dominions for a voice in the foreign policy of the Empire is going to do India good, for the British Government cannot now leave India out of any arrangements of that kind. If India were regularly consulted before, and not after, the foreign policy was determined, we should avoid many snags."

With the Government of India again settled in Simla, the battle round the Waziristan policy started again. The Home Government, urged on by the British General Staff,

[1] Major O. Lund.

was in favour of complete occupation; but the majority of the Viceroy's Council was strongly of opinion that, in the state of India's finances, she could not afford such a policy. Some of Rawlinson's friends at home were of opinion that it was his duty, as a soldier, to stand out for the best military policy, irrespective of financial and political considerations. This view he combated in a letter to one of them: "I find my dual position, as Commander-in-Chief and as Member of Council, a difficult one. It forces me to look at the financial and political aspects of military questions. By taking these into consideration, I have succeeded in modifying most of the decisions in Council which affect the army; certainly those in connection with the military reductions, the Air Force, and the policy in Waziristan.

"As to the latter, there is no doubt in my mind, nor in the minds of my colleagues in Council, nor in the minds of my committee on Waziristan policy, that the right thing to do is to remain in military occupation, and to administer the country right up to the Durand line. But we came to the conclusion that this could not be done without spending between five and six crores of rupees a year in carrying it out. This money cannot be obtained without an increase in taxation, which is politically impossible. We have, therefore, put forward a second-best policy, which will mean the withdrawal of the troops from the Jandola–Ladha line, and the occupation of Razmak by local levies. This is admittedly not the best policy, but, as it can be carried out within the financial allotment of this year, I have agreed that, in our present state of financial stringency, it is the only thing to do. It is true that this second-best policy may bring on a frontier war, which would cost us much more than the best policy; but that is a risk which I have pointed out to Council, and they have accepted it. It is a governmental responsibility.

"I could, I know, get the support of the General Staff at home, of the India Office, and probably of the Cabinet, for the 'whole hog' policy; but the only result would be a deadlock between the Government at home and the Indian Government, which would probably end in the resignation

of the Viceroy and most of his Council. The consequences out here would, at the present juncture, be very serious. It would be impossible for Vincent, Hailey and Innes to stand up in Legislature and defend the policy of the Home Government from which they dissent individually. We have, therefore, to go carefully, and, while I am quite prepared to take a firm stand upon what I consider to be the irreducible minimum for military security, I am not prepared to stand out and dissent on purely military grounds from a policy which I consider the best in the circumstances. As long as I have got enough soldiers to deal with internal unrest, and to protect the frontier, I am satisfied. If we are going to have a war on the frontier, internal rebellion, disloyalty in the Indian Army, and a war with Afghanistan—all at the same time—obviously I have not enough soldiers, and I must ask for reinforcements from England; and it is for the Government at home to see that they have sufficient reinforcements available for such emergencies as they consider may arise.

"The fact is that the Home Government, having introduced the Reform schemes, are now afraid they are going too fast. They are trying to put on the brake, and the machine is inclined to run away from them. But we must either trust the Indian or not trust him. The schemes have got to be carried out honestly in their entirety, with a view to eventual Dominion self-government, or else we must return to the old method of ruling India with the sword. There is no half-way house."

While these discussions were going on, came the news of the murder of Sir Henry Wilson. "I am sick at heart," wrote Rawlinson, on June 27; "I have lost my most intimate and valued friend, and the country a very distinguished public servant. Our careers have been parallel ever since we first met in the Mounted Infantry in Burma, in 1888, and we have written to each other almost continuously for thirty years. At the dinner which the Army Council gave me before I left for India, Henry said, 'The Lord Rawlinson and I joined the army together, and together we have gone at all our fences. He has jumped every fence just in front of me, except the last (meaning his pro-

motion to Field-Marshal), but I am bound to admit that I benefited by the holes he made in the fences.' He finished up his last letter to me, after he left the War Office to go into politics, 'Now you will have to jump all the fences by yourself. God bless you!' Well, he is out of the race, and I can never replace him as a friend. It makes me feel very lonely, for there is no one here who understands what I have lost. Losing one's friends is the thing of all others that makes one feel one's years, for, in other respects, I am as young as ever I was. The boys are very nice, and I delight in them; but they never can be the same as men of one's own age, with whom one has worked and played."

By the end of July, Rawlinson's programme for army reform was beginning to take definite shape, and he then wrote: "I find that the work here is steadily getting less, and is certainly now no more than one man who knows his job can do. The decentralization to the commands is working smoothly, and the four command system has already justified itself. We have just heard that the Cabinet will agree to the creation of twenty battalions of Indian Territorials, with an establishment of twenty thousand men, which is satisfactory; but they are disposed to put the brake on Indianization pretty heavily, to limit it to four battalions. In my opinion, we could go farther than this with safety, and any limit which we cannot justify with sound argument will simply lead to a cry from the Legislature that we do not trust them, and have no real intention to help them to self-government. The proper limit to Indianization is the number of native officers, of the right type to do without British leadership, who may be forthcoming. We cannot, in any event, get enough of these during the next ten years to make the experiment a dangerous one, from the most alarmist point of view.

"I have got my revised Waziristan scheme through Council, after a prolonged struggle, and had to fight like a tiger to resist further cuts in the army to balance the additional cost on the frontier. All this is very wearing and, to my mind, rather futile. The whole position of Indian finance needs reviewing. I shall, therefore, welcome the arrival of Inchcape, who is coming out to run a sort

of Geddes committee for India. A man of his financial experience must see that India's credit depends, first and foremost, upon security, and that credit is what India most wants; first, to tide her over her own financial difficulties, which I believe are only temporary; and, secondly, to develop her resources, which are almost limitless. We take great pride in the canals we have dug, the mines we have developed, the railways we have built, and the education we have provided; but, as Clemenceau said when he was out here last year, we have only yet touched the fringe of development. I am not a financier, but it seems to me that India could well afford a National Debt, which she has so far avoided by financing most of her undertakings from revenue. This makes it a perpetual struggle to raise money for reforms which will produce future economies—as in the case of my army programme—and almost equally difficult to get money for productive undertakings. The credit of India is good, and will remain so, unless we imperil her security by doing something foolish.

"After two years' experience of Indian government, I have come to the conclusion that it is one of the most uneconomical in the world to-day. In general method and in detail it is out of date. The state and display which the Moguls introduced into India on a lavish scale, two hundred and odd years ago, still surrounds the Viceroy, the governors of provinces, and the Indian states. Some degree of pomp and ceremony is, of course, necessary in any state, and particularly in the East; still, I cannot help thinking that Curzon dreamed too much of 'the Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep.' Large sums are spent annually, all over India, upon regal splendour in the form of bodyguards, red chaprassis, entertainments, huge palaces, etc., which, whatever effect they may have had upon the Indian of the past, do not impress the politically-minded Indian of to-day. I ask myself whether there is any real need to maintain all these relics of past grandeur.

"Then we are spending huge sums on the construction of New Delhi, at a time when it may quite possibly be necessary to issue paper money, in order to meet ways and means expenditure—a change which would impress the

The economists won't be able to make out a case for throwing away the money we have already spent. The troops are looking healthy and well, and everything is ready for the occupation of Razmak. I am now confident that I shall see Waziristan occupied during my time of office." A few weeks later, the occupation of Razmak was finally approved by Council, the completion of the road being deferred until the financial situation improved.

At the end of the year he wrote: "Things are looking up. I have had a long talk with Inchcape, who is evidently out to be helpful. I assured him of my desire to make every possible economy compatible with security. I gave him a long lecture on frontier policy, and told him that, if there was any question now of withdrawing from Razmak, I should resign. I think I got him to see that the occupation of Waziristan would be a real economy in the end. Anyway, Reading quite understands that, and I know he will stick to me. Meanwhile, Curzon is doing very well at Lausanne, and is, at least, endeavouring to make Turkey friendly. The Turks know perfectly well that our friendship means much more to them than that of any other Power, and they respect us, which is not their attitude to some of the others. If Curzon returns with a friendly Turkey, he ought to be made a duke, for it will be the basis of a pro-British Islam from Constantinople to Chitral, and the most effective barrier to the inroads of Bolshevism into Central Asia which could be devised. This is the policy Henry Wilson and I were advocating before the end of the War; and we might have carried it through without any difficulty after the Armistice, if it had not been for L.G.'s infatuation for Veniselos. As it is, we have wasted four years on a wrong-headed policy, but, with our usual luck, we seem likely to come out better than we deserve. A sensible line with the Turk has had an immediate reaction in India. The Mohammedans have now no grounds for the artificial alliance with Gandhi, and are drifting apart. The non-co-operators have split, and there are far fewer signs of race hatred than there were six months ago. We have still got a difficult budget to get through, but we shall do it without disturbance."

This optimistic forecast was justified in March, 1923. True, the Legislative Assembly threw out the Salt Tax, and it was necessary for the Viceroy, with some reluctance, to certify it; but the Assembly, having registered its protest, accepted the situation with reasonable good grace. Rawlinson took some credit to himself for this result: "Blackett,[1] the new finance member, was profuse in his thanks for the help I had given him by accepting Inchcape's economies, and said that this had made the budget possible. Well, I did it with that object; and I expect I shall get plenty of criticism, particularly at home, for my pains. I have agreed to reduce the peace establishment of British battalions to 882; it was 1,003 in 1914. On the other hand, the war establishment will be 840, as compared with 816 in 1914. Thus we shall have a stronger battalion for war, and it will be better equipped. The reduction is in men available in India to replace losses; but, when one considers that men can be trained and sent out to India at least twice as fast now as they could when the old establishment was fixed and the vital need for economy, I can't find any really valid argument against this reduction. I have also agreed to reduce three cavalry regiments, one brigade of field artillery, and one battery of horse artillery. When the whole of the reductions are completed, the British troops in India will have been reduced by more than 18,000, as compared with 1914, and the native troops by about the same number. That is the absolute limit to which I can go, and I have made it perfectly clear that I have agreed to make these cuts, not because I regard the present establishment as unnecessarily high, but because 'taking one consideration with another,' as Gilbert says, I have come to the conclusion that it is more important for the internal peace of India that we should balance our budget, than that we should keep the extra troops. Internal peace means more men for the frontier, in case of need, and, therefore, it is worth taking some risk to secure it. I explained this to the Assembly, and rubbed it in that agitation and disturbance were the greatest enemies of military economy. I think they were impressed. We have persuaded the

[1] Sir Basil Blackett, K.C.B.

India Office to take a more liberal view of our Indianization programme, and I was able to tell the Assembly that we would make a beginning at once with two cavalry regiments and six Indian battalions. This was very well received. I told them that they would have to go slow; but I don't think many of them realize that it will take fifteen years to Indianize a battalion completely. We should have enough Sandhurst-trained Indian officers for the six battalions in 1927, but no one can say how long it will take to produce men fit for command. It is a very interesting experiment, and the future of India depends much on its success or failure.

"We owe a great deal to Inchcape, who has carried through his difficult job with great skill. He is a tough old nut, and we had many a hard battle; but he is an A1 man of business, has a great fund of common sense and, above all, a keen sense of humour. At the farewell banquet which the Viceroy gave him, he pulled my leg pleasantly: 'In the privacy of a little room in Underhill Lane, I had many a hard tussle with His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief, on the subject of military expenditure. I think we might have finished a week earlier than we did, only the Commander-in-Chief always had a mysterious engagement, every afternoon between 4 and 6, which compelled him to leave me for two hours. At first, I assumed he was going to a meeting of Council, or to a conference with his generals; but, from the costume in which he returned, I deduce that the engagement was of another nature. Lord Rawlinson works like a slave and plays like a boy, and it is no wonder that the army loves him. I pray I may be as fit as he is when I reach his age.' I think I have made a real friend of him. We exchanged photographs when we said good-bye; and I wrote on mine, 'Together we worked for the good of India,' which pleased him greatly. Altogether, I have got through my budget worries this year with less trouble than ever before, and life generally is getting easier."

As usual, Rawlinson celebrated the event by taking a short sporting holiday and, at the end of March, he left Delhi for Dehra Dun to attend the Kadir Cup meeting:

"The cup was won by young Bates of the 101st Battery. After the final had been run, West, the secretary, lent me a horse, and I was lucky enough to get a run after a pig, and to win the spear, which pleased me at my age."

From Dehra Dun he went to Jodhpur: "It is thirty-four years since I last visited this state, which I did in 1889, with Lord Roberts, when Sir Pertab was in his prime, and when the present Maharajah's father was the head of the state. It was a matter of very great regret to me not to have been able to find time to come here last year, when old Sir Pertab would have been alive, and when we could have talked over old times. Now that he has gone, a blank remains which can never be filled; but he has left a name and an example, both to the reigning house and to the sporting Rathore population of Jodhpur, which is invaluable in a state already full of sporting traditions.

"The state is one of the oldest of the Rajput group. It dates at least from the 13th century, and there is ample evidence in the forts, the walls and ancient defences, of the martial qualities of former generations. The present Rajah, though only nineteen, is a charming boy, full of the best ideas that have been instilled into him by Sir Pertab, and determined to go ahead and work solely for the prosperity of the state. He is distinctly intelligent, a thorough sportsman, plays a very good game of polo, is a fine horseman, and it did my heart good to see him ride to pig.

"Immediately on our arrival, I inspected five squadrons of Jodhpur Lancers. I was quite delighted with them. They have three service squadrons, one head-quarter squadron, and one reserve squadron; which is a far better organization than that previously adopted, of two regiments of three squadrons with nothing behind them. The experience of the war—in which the Jodhpur Lancers won a high reputation by their valour and discipline—has taught them the necessity of a reserve organization to keep them up to strength, both in men and horses, when they proceed on service. They drilled well, and their gallop past was highly creditable. These Rathores are natural horsemen, born in the saddle and very keen on soldiering, though, of course, when they proceed on service a few British officers

are necessary to maintain discipline and advise them in the arts of leadership.

"In the afternoon I visited the stables, where I saw between forty and fifty of the best type of young polo ponies that I have seen in this country. They have recently been buying, both in Bombay and Calcutta, and have collected an extraordinarily good lot.

"The young Rajah and his assistant, Hanut Singh, who is a natural son of Sir Pertab, are both of them desperately keen polo players, imbued with the spirit of old Sir P., and determined to excel on the polo field. In a year's time they will be the best-mounted team in India.

"At polo in the afternoon, the Rajah arranged a tournament of four teams; it being necessary on account of etiquette for me to play in the same team as he did. I need scarcely say that in the tournament our team won; but we had some very good games, and the ponies that they lent me were irreproachable. Being a semi-desert area, with only thirteen and a half inches of rainfall in the year, there is no possibility of a grass polo-ground, and we, therefore, played on what they call 'bujri'—which is formed of powdered stone, carefully rolled and levelled, and, though inclined to be dusty, gives an admirable surface and is never slippery.

"In the evening, after polo, we had a state banquet at the palace, where, as usual, I had to deliver myself of an oration. Curiously enough, they had found amongst the records an account of Lord Roberts's visit to Jodhpur in 1889, when Pole-Carew and I accompanied him. There, recorded in all solemnity, was the speech of 'the little man' which he delivered at the state banquet. In those days the Jodhpur Horse had only just been raised, and the little man, having referred to his inspection of them, said that he felt quite sure they would maintain the traditions of their Rathore ancestors, and would prove to be as loyal in the future to the British Crown as they had been in the past to the Maharajahs of Jodhpur. I was able to quote this in my speech; and to say that his prophecy had been more than fulfilled by the high reputation which the Jodhpur Lancers had earned during the Great War, both in France and Palestine; and it is not too much to say that this body

of horse is certainly one of the best cavalry regiments, if not the best, maintained by an Indian state."

Rawlinson left Jodhpur, with very pleasant recollections of the Rajah's hospitality, for Kathiawar, one of the few districts in India where lions are to be found. "*Gir Forest, Junaghar.*—Here we are in camp in the jungle, trying to get lion. I spent the day before yesterday at Junaghar. The state is very well run, and I was very much struck by the stud farm of Kathiawaries, which has achieved much in the improvement of horse-breeding in these parts. There is also an admirable model dairy farm, and the schools and colleges are well equipped. Our shoot yesterday was a failure, owing to heavy thunder-storms; but I got my lion all right to-day, and Gannon[1] got the lioness. These lions are easily driven, as they live in a fairly open forest and, with stops at the right places on the flanks, they can be guided to one's machan without much difficulty. They are not nearly as cunning as tigers. The forest guards do the drive, and follow them shouting without much danger to themselves."

From Kathiawar he went on to Karachi, and then for another trip along the frontier, which he found perturbed by the recent murder of Mrs. Ellis in Kohat, and the abduction of her daughter: "There is, I think, a tendency to exaggerate the significance of these frontier outrages. Many people see behind the murderers the hidden hand of the Amir; and talk about the speech he made at Jalalabad in February, which is supposed to signify his intention of backing the tribes against us. He may or he may not; but it is absurd to condemn him because a few wild men, over whom he has no control, break loose now and then. After all, there are not as many murders on the frontier in a year as there are in Chicago; and I still believe the Amir means to be friendly to us, though he has difficulties with his anti-British subjects, who are kept up to the mark by Bolshie agents. An Afridi lashkar has raided the villages of Miss Ellis's abductors and completely demolished them, so it is quite evident that the murderers have no general tribal backing. I am more than ever convinced that, if

[1] Major J. Gannon, M.V.O., his Assistant Military Secretary.

we can find work for the young men of the tribes, and are ready to punish outrages promptly, the frontier will settle itself. More and more of the Mahsuds have taken contracts and are at work on the Razmak road, which is getting on well. It is going to be the solution of Waziristan, just as Wade's road was the solution of the Highlands. I have made up my mind that we must have a garrison of Regulars at Razmak. It will form the summer station for the troops in the Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts, and, as it is 6,500 feet up, it should be cool and healthy. There is much more room there than I expected to find: it will, in time, become a very pleasant quarter."

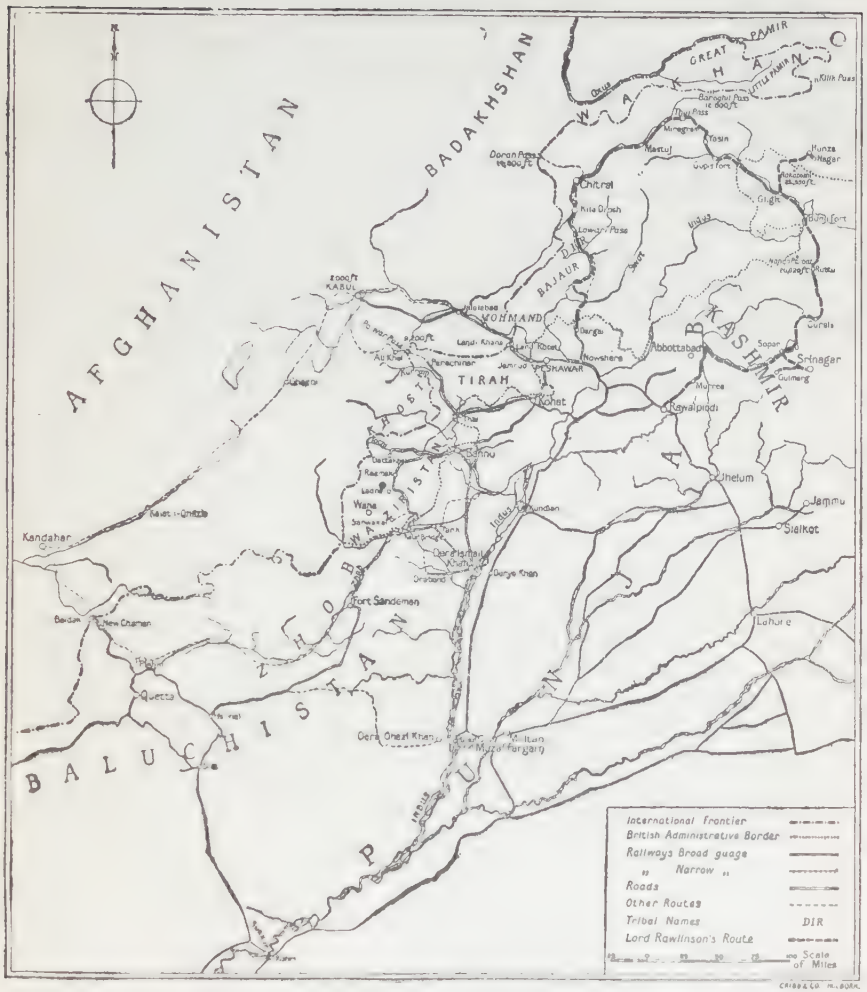
The summer of 1923 was spent by Rawlinson chiefly in giving final shape to his ideas of army reform. "The day-to-day work has been far less exacting than it was last year, and I have had more time to give thought to the larger problems of army administration, and the military problems of India generally. Waziristan is going well, and now only wants watching to prevent injudicious interference. The two big questions to which I have been giving my mind are the problem of the position of the Commander-in-Chief in the Viceroy's Council, and the future of Indianization. I think I shall get a unanimous vote in Council against the proposal to have a Civil army member. I have quite made up my mind that the right solution is to give the Commander-in-Chief a Surveyor-General of Supply, to be responsible for all contracts and purchases. If I can get this accepted, and I think I can, it will settle a controversy which has been raging for twenty years, and I shall have done my successor in particular, and India in general, a real service. I have been much helped in working this out by Braithwaite's report on the Quartermaster-General's Department. I have turned my notes over to Burden[1] and Mitra[2] to put into shape, and work out the financial aspect of the case. I am very fortunate to have two such excellent men at my elbow. Burden knows the civil and military organization of India inside out, and Mitra has all the details of finance at his

[1] E. Burden, C.I.E., I.C.S. Secretary to the C-in-C.
[2] Sir Bhupendra Mitra, K.C.I.E. Then Financial Adviser, Military Finance.

fingers' ends. Together we make a jolly good team. As to Indianization, the whole problem is the education of the right sort of boy in the right way. At present, the education of an Indian boy at Dehra Dun and Sandhurst, from the age of twelve to twenty, costs about 23,000 rupees, (£1,700); which is far beyond the means of most Indian parents, and practically cuts out the sons of many Indian officers, who are likely to be the best candidates. We must, therefore, be prepared to give scholarships and special terms to Indian officers who have done distinguished service. More money from the budget! But we have learned in England, that Woolwich and Sandhurst cost us much more than we can get from parents; and India will have to pay too, or she won't get what she wants. We have been having an argument with the Government at home over the Inchcape reductions. They won't agree to the cut of three cavalry regiments, and are holding out for two. It has become a Cabinet question, and has been delayed by Bonar Law's illness. The Viceroy has got his toes in, and he certainly cannot afford to have his budget upset. I think the solution will be for England to pay for the third regiment for the present. Having put all these matters in train, I am now preparing for what promises to be an extraordinarily interesting trip to Chitral and Gilgit, and, as usual, I shall be heartily glad to get away from Simla. The North-West frontier is a queer country. There is a war going on between Swat and Dir, about some land which the Swatis took from the Buners. On hearing that I was coming, both sides have agreed to have an armistice for a couple of days, while I ride through to Dir, where I am to spend a day with the Nawab. Once we get over the Lowari Pass into the valley of the Panjkora we shall be beyond the theatre of operations, and then can go quietly on to Chitral."

After a short stay with the Nawab of Dir, Rawlinson reached Chitral on August 3. "I was met by all the notables of the place, including some seventy to eighty Kohistanis, who had marched in two hundred miles to declare their attachment to Chitral. The Mehta is very anxious to increase his territory by acquiring Kohistan, and this was a little manœuvre to impress me with his case. I was

escorted by the Mehta's band and pipes to the polo ground, to witness the game of shooting at the popinjay. Two glass balls are tied to the top of a pole some twenty-five feet high, and the local bucks gallop past it, shooting at the balls with rifles loaded with small stones. After some forty shots, someone hit one of the balls, and the show ended. We then rode to the Mehta's fort, which is the one in which Robertson and Townsend were besieged in 1895. At the gate, the Mehta met me, lying on a couch and looking very ill. He is suffering from appendicitis, brought on by eating too much after the long fast of Id. He had sent five of his sons to meet me at the frontier, and here he produced another six. I am told that he has twenty-four daughters as well, so he has done his best to secure the succession. When the ceremonies were over, I did a sketch of the Hindu Kush, of which there is a glorious view, far finer than I had been led to anticipate, of snows and ice-peaks towering up to 25,000 feet. In the evening the Red Kafirs and the aboriginal Chitralis gave us a very picturesque dance round a bonfire. The one drawback was the disgusting dirt of everybody and everything, but the little girls were quite graceful. I did a sketch of them to-day, and afterwards played polo with the Mehta's sons. It was interesting playing on the ground which was the birthplace of modern polo. The ponies are very small, only thirteen hands, and we had to have our sticks cut short. I was surprised to find that the ground is quite well kept, and the grass good. The ground is about two hundred yards long, and only forty to fifty wide. A low wall some two feet six inches high runs down each side, and on this the spectators sit. The game was quite good, put we had no difficulty in beating the Mehta's family. I got three goals, which were loudly applauded. After the game we saw the Kafir archers shooting with their bows and arrows, but they were not much good. Much the same sort of thing must have gone on during a state visit to a baron's castle in Germany, nine hundred years ago. The real problem of Chitral, as it is for most of the frontier, is to find some means of livelihood for these people. The whole country is wretchedly poor. On the other hand,



THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA, SHOWING ROUTE OF LORD RAWLINSON'S TOUR TO GILGIT

if we could help them to get rich, we should have to defend them, for, though the Chitrali is a good climber and a fair shot, he would never stand up to the Pathan or the Afghan."

The journey to Gilgit was made by the valleys of the Chitral and Yarkhum rivers, to the Thui pass, 14,700 feet high. The party then dropped down into the valley of the Gilgit at Yasin. At Miragram, on the way, Rawlinson was much impressed by the prowess of a mountain snake.

"*August 10.*—A most extraordinary thing occurred today, which I would never have believed had I not seen it. We were having lunch in a grove of apricot trees. At the top of the tree, immediately over our heads, was an old magpie's nest, in which a family of sparrows had settled. We could hear the young birds chirping. Presently, about a dozen sparrows started to fly and hop round the nest in a state of wild excitement, and, looking carefully, we found the cause to be a snake crawling through the twigs of which the nest was composed. It was no use to climb the tree, and attack the snake with a stick, for it would probably have fallen on its assailant's face. So we decided to try to hit him with the only weapon we could muster, a revolver belonging to Bowers of the Chitral Scouts, who was accompanying us. Bowers hit the snake in the tail with the first shot, and, after firing eight times, brought it down, when we found five bullet holes in it. Remarkably fine shooting. The snake was about three feet long, with grey spots and a flat head. It was evidently after the young birds, but how on earth it knew they were there, and how it managed to climb to the nest, which was twenty-five feet from the ground, is a complete mystery to me. The tree was eighteen inches in diameter at the base, and there was no branch nearer than five feet from the ground. Three of the Mehta's sons are with me. They play polo at each village they come to. The Mehta has supplied me with a good Badakshah pony—a bit rough, but very sure-footed—and I am thoroughly enjoying myself. The regular exercise, open-air life, and absence from worries of all kinds, is doing me a world of good."

Gilgit was reached on August 20, and there he reviewed

his experiences. "The march down the Gilgit valley is not of any great interest. At Gupis, we found two companies of a Kashmiri regiment under a Gurkha officer, who complains that there are no enemies about; and I gathered from the demeanour of the inhabitants that they are not likely to supply the deficiency. The governors of Yasin and the other provinces through which we passed—they are, by the way, Indians whom we have put in to rule the country under the Gilgit agency—all tell me that they have no trouble and there is practically no crime. The people are poor, but the necessities of life are easily provided and they are content. Fruit is abundant and good, and the orchards are well cared for. At this time of year, apricots, peaches, apples and pears, mulberries and melons, are to be had in great quantity, and they are very good.

"At Gilgit we found two more companies of the Kashmiri regiment, and I was told that three other companies were up in the hills cutting fuel for the winter. The men are all Dogras and Gurkhas under Gurkha officers. The Dogras are a first-rate lot, as good as I have seen anywhere; but the Gurkhas did not seem to me to be up to the quality of the men we get. Still, the Kashmiri troops did splendidly in East Africa; and at Tanga they distinguished themselves greatly where some others did not.

"The Gilgit agency has acquired a great reputation for useful work, but it seems to me to have outgrown much of its usefulness and to be now an unnecessary expense. We took Yasin away from Chitral after the rebellion of 1895; but Chitral is now very loyal, and it would be a graceful act to return it. We could then make the frontier of Chitral march with that of Kashmir, and do away with the Gilgit agency. The authorities at Simla are nervous about Bolshevik infiltration through the passes of the Hindu Kush, just as they used to be about Russian armies coming this way. But there is little or no danger of this taking place without our knowledge, as it is impossible for any human being to move in the country without the inhabitants knowing all about it. I would insist on the Mehta, in return for the provinces which I propose to

return to him, receiving a British Resident at either Chitral or Mastuj, who would keep us fully informed of what is going on. Some of the districts in Northern Chitral and Yasin produce men of manly type and good physique, and there would be no difficulty in training some thousands of them in regiments of scouts. This would help them to improve their condition and would be welcome. They are, most of them, followers of the Aga Khan; are not fanatical Mohammedans, and quite ready to be loyal to us. They would be useful people, if we washed, taught and trained them. I think that on the lines which I have sketched here there is room for considerable economy combined with an increase of efficiency, such as would remove this bogy of infiltration through the Hindu Kush passes. I am very glad to have had a chance of studying these interesting problems on the spot.

"This part of the world is so remote that it is very difficult to get a clear view of it at second-hand, and its difficulties are, as usual, exaggerated when seen from a distance. The more I see of the North-West frontier, the more convinced I am that the right policy with these people is to civilize them gradually by opening up communication with them. Shutting them up only tempts them to break out; just as a healthy schoolboy is tempted to break bounds because a place is out of bounds. The making of roads does not cost as much as military expeditions and gives us a sure return in the long run, which small wars do not. The trouble is, of course, that there is never enough money for the long run, and our policy is determined by what is immediately expedient. However, by pegging away, we shall win through in the end."

From Gilgit the party turned northwards to Nagar and Hunza, which was reached on August 24; and, after leaving this remote valley of the Karakoram range, Rawlinson wrote:—"The Hunza-Nagar valley lies between two impassable snow ranges of an average height of 25,000 feet. There are only two entrances to the valley—one from the north over the Kilik Pass (17,000 feet), and the other up the valley from Gilgit, which is the way we took. The valley is very well watered by the torrents

HUNZA FORT

From a Water-colour Sketch by Lord Rawlinson

oming down from the glaciers, and every scrap of land o which water can be brought is admirably terraced and carefully cultivated. Fruit trees of all kinds abound, and I was given unlimited apricots, apples, pears, peaches and grapes, which were excellent. The scenery is superb. The glaciers, with their miles and miles of blue ice, gliding down from the immense snow-field above, were alone more than worth travelling so many hundreds of miles to see. Rakaposhi, which is 25,000 feet high, towers above the valley like a huge sugar-loaf and, with the exception of the Hindu Kush, is the finest mountain I have seen.

"The people shut off by these mountains are different from any of the peoples I have seen in these parts. They have markedly a Mongolian look, and are fine men; especially the Hunzas, who are ruled by a Mir of intelligence and character. The people used to suffer from an addiction to a very potent wine made of mulberries; but the present Mir has introduced prohibition, and won't allow it to be made. A curious feature is that the men of this essentially mountain race are all good horsemen and desperately proud of their horses. Polo is their chief recreation and, in their barbaric way, they are quite good at it. We played a game against their team, and it was a hard scuffle which lasted half an hour, ending in a draw of two goals all. In both places there was the usual shooting at the popinjay, and at Nagar there was tent-pegging at small silver shields about three inches long stuck in the ground. I was lucky enough to get my shield amid yells of applause.

"After dinner with the Mir of Nagar, there were innumerable sword and figure dances and, as a finale, an animal dance in which ibex and markhor were introduced, each represented by two men under blankets, with horns tied on to the leader's head. After some pirouetting, the game was stalked from one side by a sportsman with a gun, and from the other by a man in a leopard's skin. The curtain came down when the sportsman triumphantly shot the leopard and the game.

"To get from Hunza to Nagar, we had to cross the

Nagar river by a suspension bridge made of three ropes of twisted twigs, one for each hand and one lower down for the feet. It was about one hundred yards across, broken in the middle by a rock. The Mir of Nagar had come down to meet us, and there was a great crowd to see us cross. The Mir was obviously in a great fuss lest I should tumble into the river, but I got over without any difficulty.

"My visit to these remote parts has done good, for, besides collecting a deal of valuable information, the visit of the Commander-in-Chief will be talked of for many a long day, and has raised our *izzat*.[1] During the war a couple of Germans, bent on mischief, wandered into this valley from Afghanistan. Some cunning Hunzas offered to guide them back to Afghanistan and, instead, took them to Gilgit, whence they were brought to India and interned."

The return journey through Kashmir brought Rawlinson back to Simla in the third week of September, to find that a huge pile of correspondence awaited him, and that a sketch of his, of the snow lakes in the Thui Pass, had been "highly commended" at the Simla Art Exhibition. "I am glad to find my sketches, which give me such pleasure, give pleasure to others, too." The correspondence, with his usual energy, he finished by working ten to twelve hours a day for a week. He was then free to turn to larger questions, and on October 12 wrote triumphantly:

"To-day I got the final approval of Council:

"(1) To my policy in Waziristan, including a garrison for Razmak of six battalions, two batteries, a pioneer battalion, and two sapper and miner companies.

"(2) To the creation of a Master-General of Supply.

"(3) To the postponement of the appointment of a Civil member of Council until the Commission comes out in 1929 for the revision of the Government of India Act.

"I am delighted, for I am certain that by 1929 both the Waziristan policy and the Master-General of Supply will have justified themselves. It has been a long struggle, and

[1] Prestige.

it is very satisfactory to have come through it successfully. We have still to get the approval of the Secretary of State, but I am confident that it will come. I have now got to tackle the new budget and, as money is going to be as tight as ever, I fear I shall have to cut out many projects which I should dearly like to carry through. What I want to do most is to complete the reserve stores, and get clothing for the reservists, of which there is none at all. Our successors will split when our names are mentioned, if we do not profit by the lessons of Mesopotamia, and prevent the loss and suffering due to lack of the provision of stores. I am going to lay before the Viceroy and Members of Council the paper entitled 'Preparation of the Army for War,' which has been drawn up by the General Staff. I have revised it several times, but it does not satisfy me yet. I shall hand it over to Burden to put into proper form, as at present it is nothing but a squeal from all and sundry for the odds and ends they have not been able to get, owing to lack of funds. It must be a statesmanlike paper, putting the broad facts before the Government of India, and making it clear to them that it is both stupid and wicked to keep soldiers without providing them with the means to go to war in good trim. This is the most important work that remains for me to do and, on the whole, I am very well satisfied with the progress I have made this year. With the able assistance of Mitra, I have got through the bulk of the arrangements for giving effect to the Inchcape cuts. I have not been able to accept them all; but I have come to terms with Blackett, who recognizes that I am out to help. This is satisfactory, for it avoids controversy in Council, and I loathe these dog-fights over necessaries. I leave Simla in better spirits than I have ever done." The year ended with the return to Delhi and the usual winter tours of inspection.

The budget, the release of Gandhi, and the meeting of the Legislative Assembly, were the chief interests of the first weeks of 1924, and of all these Rawlinson was able to write cheerfully. "Trade is definitely looking up, and the budget pans out better than I expected. I got my military estimates through with little difficulty. I have got

enough to complete, or nearly complete, the permanent buildings at Razmak during the financial year.

"Jacob is just back from a trip round the frontier. He was delighted with the progress that has been made, both with the road and the barracks at Razmak. He took Sir Alfred Mond with him, and they motored round the circular road in a day. We have got quite a good aerodrome already established at Razmak, and everyone there swears by the climate. The Mahsuds are quite docile, and, though we have withdrawn all Regular troops to Razmak, Jacob and his party travelled with a convoy of ten cars, escorted only by four armoured cars. Mond was much struck by what has been done, and will, in future, be a useful agent for our frontier policy.

"I have managed to get fifty lakhs for armoured cars, tanks, guns and ammunition, and I have also got twenty-two lakhs for the provision of winter mobilization clothing for the field army, and a sum for the purchase of lorries, which will be kept in oil for mobilization. Altogether, I am really beginning to feel confident that I will see the programme, which I set before myself, completed.

"After a long discussion in the Council, it was decided to release Gandhi. It was something of a gamble, as in this country one never knows what effect an appearance of yielding may have on the agitators; but the release has had no visible effect on them at all and, as they did not use the incident at once to make trouble, I don't think they will make much of it later.

"The Assembly is improving rapidly. The debating power is certainly much higher than it was in the last House. We rather expected trouble, as the new Swarajist members turned up in their Khadir Gandhi clothing at the State opening by the Viceroy, which looked like a challenge, but the debates have been sensibly conducted, and the tone has been reasonably moderate. A motion was brought forward for the grant of full Dominion status at once. I did not speak, as the main issues are purely political; but I observed that none of the advocates of the proposal even mentioned the prime difficulty. A country cannot govern itself if it cannot defend itself, and it will be many a long

year before India can do without British troops and British officers. I shall put this straight to the Assembly and the Council of State when I speak on the military budget.

"Meanwhile, army affairs are running smoothly. I have less and less to do in the office, and it is clear that my efforts at decentralization are bearing good fruit. Jacob tells me that the correspondence in his office has fallen by more than 50 % during the past year.

"I hope the four command system is now firmly established. We have just published the 'Evolution of the Army in India;'[1] the book written mostly by Burden, and completed at army head-quarters. I have given a copy to each member of the Assembly, and I hope it may teach that body something about the organization of the army. I think the book will do good. It certainly sets forth very clearly how each department of the army works."

Before the close of the session the Swarajists made their demonstration, and succeeded in making the Assembly throw out some of the principal taxes, which obliged the Viceroy to certify the Finance Bill. At the same time the usual demands for a more rapid Indianization of the army were voiced. With the financial question Rawlinson was but indirectly concerned; but upon the demand for Indianization he wrote in April:

"During the late session, the question of the Indianization of the army has been put forward by many of the more intelligent members of the Assembly. They do not the least understand the immense dangers and difficulties of the problem, and are actuated purely by the desire to have a completely Indianized army in the shortest possible time. This desire is quite natural; for those politicians who have looked into the future of India, and considered what responsible government in India really means, fully realize that no country that is not capable of its own defence can assume full responsibility for its own government. They, therefore, clamour for the rapid Indianization of the army.

"In order to put before them some of the immense difficulties and fundamental issues of the problem, we are considering whether it would not be advisable to refer the

[1] 'The Army in India and Its Evolution," Calcutta, 1924.

question of the Indianization of the army to a committee, composed of soldiers who have really studied the problem, and non-official members of the Legislature who view that problem purely from the political standpoint. Such a committee would lay before the political members of the Assembly some of the complicated aspects of the Indianization of the army, and show them that under no possible conditions can any solution be arrived at for a very considerable period of years—probably not for two generations. In the meantime, in order to show the non-official members of the Legislature to what extent we are moving in the direction which they wish, I have sent some fifty members of both Houses to visit the Dehra Dun College, and to see for themselves the class of education, mental and physical, which we are now giving to the young Indian boys between the ages of twelve and eighteen. The first party returned three days ago, enthusiastic and delighted with what they had seen. The thing that struck them most was that we tolerated no distinction in caste, religion, or in province of origin, and that the boys were being brought up to be Indians first and foremost. It had not struck them as possible that such a thing would be done in a British controlled establishment, and they were much impressed. I am quite sure myself that the only satisfactory road along which we can proceed with any hope of success is by the development and enlargement of Dehra Dun College. The process is slow, too slow for the idealism of the modern Indian politician, but this is inevitable; and nothing will induce me to increase the pace, so long as I am Commander-in-Chief.[1] I am doubtful if, even through the medium of Dehra Dun College, India will ever be able to produce a sufficient number of good Indian officers for the requirements of the Indian Army; nor do I believe that such an army will ever be able to get on without a certain proportion of British officers; but, in the course of years, by good will and strenuous endeavour on both sides, we shall, I have no doubt, find an eventual solution—not on the lines

[1] In August, 1922, he had agreed to a minute of the Viceroy in Council, advocating the Indianization of eight regiments and adumbrating complete Indianization in thirty years. Subsequently he changed his mind, and put the minimum period at two generations.

which the French are adopting in the army in Morocco, where they mix French and Moroccan private soldiers as equals in the same unit—but on the lines of our present Indian Army, in which the proportion of Indian King's commissioned officers will be higher, and the number of British officers in the respective units will be fewer.

"The trouble is that the solution of the political problem, in so far as the self-government of India is concerned, is, and must always be, directly dependent upon the military problem; that is to say, it is impossible to envisage a self-governing India without an Indianized army. The process of the Indianization of the army must proceed extremely slowly if it is not to prove a complete failure. On the other hand, the pressure which has been, and is being, exerted by the Swarajists, and the views of many of the more moderate politicians who look to self-government in eight or ten years' time, will probably force the political side of the problem to proceed more rapidly than the military side can ever hope to proceed; and the supreme difficulty, therefore, arises of keeping these two processes of development at anything like an even rate of advance. Even under the Government of India Act a reconsideration of the Constitution is contemplated by the Statutory Committee as early as 1929. By that time very little progress will have been made with the Indianization of the army. In five years' time from now, instead of having eighty Indian officers with King's commissions, as we have at present, we shall have, under the most favourable circumstances, probably not more than two hundred to three hundred. If the Indian Army is to be completely Indianized, we want over two thousand, and it is more than doubtful whether a sufficient number of the right type of Indian will ever come forward to supply the military requirements of the army; for the Indian of the officer class, except a few of the better-class people of the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, dislikes discipline and hard physical work, and is not imbued with any keenness for a military career. The love of leadership and soldiering is one of the foremost characteristics of the British public-school boy of the present day, a form of ambition which is quite absent

in the average Indian boy. Even if we succeeded in obtaining the required number of young Indians to come forward, educated them at Dehra Dun, passed them through Sandhurst, and eventually appointed them to regiments; it is practically certain that, after four, five or six years' service in the army, they would become tired of the discipline and the discomforts, and would send in their papers and return to their homes.

"The young British gentleman enters the British Army for the love of soldiering, and for the love of leading the men of his unit. The Indian boy, certainly at present, enters the army, firstly, to serve alongside British officers, whom he respects; and, secondly, for the *izzat* and the privileged position which a King's commission gives him amongst his fellow-Indians. I think this will be true in the future too. He does not now, and I am afraid never will, enter the army for love of the profession of arms, prepared to lay down his life for the sake of the land of his birth. In the absence of a definitely Indian patriotism, an efficient and completely Indianized army becomes unthinkable."

As soon as the Assembly had risen, Rawlinson went off on a ten days' sporting holiday to Nepal and Gwalior. "Colonel O'Connor entertained us, on behalf of the Maharajah of Nepal, in a very comfortable camp, which we changed on the third day, and placed some fifty elephants at our disposal for the shikar. I was deeply interested in their methods of killing tiger, which are, I believe, peculiar to Nepal.

"The country consists of large areas of saal forest, with big patches of cultivation scattered about in the forests. The terrain is flat, and lies just within the south-eastern corner of Nepal. The saal forest is usually devoid of undergrowth, but in certain places there are shallow nullahs, some with a good deal of water in them, some dry. When a tiger shoot is being prepared, the villagers, who are not allowed to kill tigers, which are royal game, are told to tether buffalo calves near the nullahs in which there is water. About sixty calves were tied up every night for us, the villagers getting paid for any calf killed. The moment there is a kill, news is at once sent to camp, and one usually

gets the news before 10 a.m., as the runner leaves the neighbourhood of the kill at dawn. O'Connor then sifted the news, in consultation with his shikaris, and came to a conclusion as to the most likely spot or spots, for there was sometimes news of as many as five or six kills within reach. The plan for the day having been settled, the elephants were started off at once to the place chosen, which might be anything from two to eight miles away. If the place was near one of the jungle roads, we waited to give the elephants a good start; if it was not, we mounted elephants specially selected for riding. The jungle roads are passable for motor-cars, but are a bit bumpy. Meantime, a shikari had been sent on to make the plan on the spot, so that no time should be wasted when the elephants came up. These arrived in single file, and were turned off alternatively to left and right at intervals of from thirty to forty yards. A complete ring of elephants is then made round the bit of jungle in which the tiger is marked down. During this manœuvre absolute silence is observed, and the elephants know the game, and move as quietly as cats. Once the ring is complete, everyone begins to jabber and shout, and the elephants, if the jungle is thick, smash down the smaller trees and pull down creepers so as to give a clear space of some twenty to thirty yards around the howdah elephants in which the guns are posted.

"When all is ready the elephants move in together towards the centre until the ring is not more than one hundred to one hundred and fifty yards across, having been some five hundred or six hundred yards across to begin with, and then the fun begins. During the closing in of the ring it sometimes happens that the tiger attempts to break through the ring, and charges out with a 'wouf' at the elephants; but if they stand, as they usually do—and when the mahouts yell and shout, as they always do—the unwounded tiger generally shrinks back into a thick patch of jungle. Then two selected elephants with two heroes as mahouts (they are the two commanders of the whole troop of elephants) go into the middle and proceed to rout out the tiger. No jungle is too thick for them. Armed only with a spear, these two men drive their elephants into

the densest places. The smashing of the trees, and the crunching of the grass and undergrowth, is usually more than the tiger can stand, and he begins shifting about in the confined space. Sometimes he makes a bolt of it at the line of elephants; sometimes he sneaks about amongst the nettles and brambles; but he is pretty sure to expose himself to view, and it is then that the guns have their chance. Even if he is missed and does break through, word is at once passed, and in less than five minutes a new ring is formed and the same procedure repeated. We never lost a tiger, once we had him in the ring. It is very seldom that a tiger makes for an elephant, unless he has been wounded; and, if a big rifle like a ·450 bore is used, it is almost certain that he will be too badly wounded to spring on to an elephant.

"As in all tiger shooting, success depends mainly on the skill with which the kill is placed. Once the tiger has killed and dragged the kill into a piece of thick jungle where there is water, he will not move for from ten to twelve hours. Therefore, the kill must be where the tiger is likely to see it; it must be within twenty or thirty yards of a patch of thick jungle; and there must be water near by, for the tiger always drinks after a meal. Of course, the rope by which the kill is tethered must be strong enough to hold the calf, and weak enough for the tiger to break it and drag away the kill. Success, as in most of other pursuits, depends on experience, observation and careful planning. It is sometimes contended that ringing a tiger is not sporting, and that it does not give the tiger a chance. Personally, I prefer it, from the sporting point of view, to shooting from a machan, in which you nearly always get a steady, easy shot, and sometimes a standing shot; whereas the excitement as the ring closes, and the difficulty of seeing and shooting the tiger as he creeps about in the thick jungle, tries the shooting of the sportsman much higher—and, to my mind, is far preferable to sitting for hours in a machan, and then blowing the tiger to glory with a powerful rifle at a range of from ten to twenty-five yards.

"We came back from Nepal through Darjeeling, when it was too hazy to see the snows, and went on to Gwalior

for a shoot with Scindia. Our party at Gwalior consisted of the Maharajah, Crump, the Resident, Jack Gannon and myself. Scindia's arrangements were excellent, and his shikaris are admirable and quite reliable as to the news they bring in and the plans they make for the beat. Of course, there are not so many tigers as in Nepal, and kills are not so frequent. We got news of five or six during my four days; but only one of them was really favourable, and in that case I got two tigers. Scindia is a very agreeable companion for a shoot, for, besides being a real sportsman, he is very intelligent and full of ideas about Indian politics and the future of his state. He is very annoyed at the refusal of the India Office to let him have modern artillery for his Imperial Service troops, and says it is a direct aspersion on his loyalty. I quite agree and must see what I can do about it. It is absurd to keep up these post-Mutiny precautions. None of the native states can manufacture or obtain modern artillery ammunition without our knowledge and consent, so the India Office can exercise as much control as it wants to, and why, then, annoy some of our best friends in India?"

The summer passed quietly in Simla, Rawlinson's chief interest being in watching the development of the work of the new Master-General of Supply. "I have been delighted with the way in which Atkinson[1] has been getting to work as Master-General of Supply. No sounder army reform was ever carried through, and as time goes on he will save the Government many lakhs of rupees and will immensely increase the efficiency of the business side of the army. He will also develop the resources of India and, in conjunction with the Indian Stores department, will make India much more self-supporting than it has ever been. The need for that is the big lesson of the War, as far as India is concerned. This ought to settle a controversy which has raged in India for thirty years, and I am proud to have had a hand in it."

During June and July the bill authorizing Governors and the Commander-in-Chief to come home on leave during their term of office slowly found its way through

[1] Major-General Sir E. Atkinson, K.B.E.

Parliament, and received the King's consent on August 1. Rawlinson promptly sailed from Bombay for four months' leave and reached London at the end of the month. There followed a pleasant round of visits to old friends. In September he was commanded to Balmoral, where he went out stalking, missed a good stag, which was scared as he was drawing a bead on it, and got a hummel; but his bad luck as a stalker was more than made up by his success as an artist, both the King and Queen being delighted with his sketches of Chitral. On his way south from Balmoral he stayed with Lord Lovat at Beaufort Castle, and during the visit made a characteristic entry in his diary:—"On Saturday we had a good day on the river and pulled out seven fish, one quite a good salmon of twenty pounds, but I only got a sea trout of one and a half pounds. In the afternoon, when the fish were really on the rise, I proposed to go and do a sketch of the castle from the river. To appreciate the full beauties of England and Scotland one must come back to them after some years in the East. When living among them one is apt to get surfeited and to miss the fine points. The changing lights, the greens and blues, the soft atmosphere and the peace of the country, fill me with joy. I wouldn't have missed my sketch for anything. Frankly, I prefer the amusement of sketching to that of flogging a river with an 18-foot rod. With a sketch you have something permanent for your labour, and to bring back to you in after years the delights you have enjoyed; but in fishing you have only the brief thrill of hooking and playing your fish and nothing to show afterwards."

The last weeks of his leave were spent in adjusting outstanding questions with India and the War Office, and he was particularly pleased to have been able to induce the Committee of Imperial Defence to allow the principal native states to have modern field artillery. "I think," he wrote towards the end of his stay, "I have done India a good turn by my run home. I have practically persuaded the War Office to forgo its claims upon India for money spent during the War; as the sum involved is about one million, Blackett should be grateful. I have also got my scheme for increased pay for officers in India well on the

way. It has been very interesting to get into touch once more with what is doing at home. Four years is a long time to be away, and, even with the best of correspondents, one can't keep abreast of affairs at home in India. The same applies, of course, to Indian affairs, and I am convinced that this new leave for high officials is sound. Now that the journey out and back is so much easier than it was, say, thirty years ago, we ought to have far more interchange of visits between India and home. Just as, during the War, London was always more pessimistic than the front, so I find that those in high places here are more gloomy about the state of India than we are at Delhi. As regards the army at home, there is generally a more professional spirit than there was before the War. Three things strike me as immediately necessary. First, we want to make the General Staff more really Imperial than it is, and to have all the Dominions regularly represented in the War Office and in the commands. Secondly, I don't think we are making enough of the Territorials. I have been greatly struck by what I have seen of them. We have at present in the ranks a large number of first-class men of good war experience. This is a passing phase; but, to take advantage of it and make the results permanent, I would spend more on the Terriers and less on the Regular army. We must remember that in any big crisis the Terriers and the Dominion troops are the Army of the Empire, and the Regulars only the advanced guard. The third need, is a drastic change in the system of promotion in the Regular army. Up to now the able and ambitious man has usually found it a positive handicap to command his regiment, and gets his promotion through staff service. The result is that many men who get to the top have had little or no experience of command. Robertson rose from private to field marshal, without ever commanding anything bigger than a corporal's guard; and Henry Wilson went from 2nd lieutenant to field-marshal, having commanded a provisional battalion for a year, and an army corps for a few months. Both would have been greater public servants than they were if they had had greater experience of command of troops, and the army generally would have got to know them as it never

really did. It is only by insisting on command as a qualification for promotion that we shall bridge the gap between the fighting troops and the staff. Plumer is to preside over a committee which is to consider promotion, and I have had a long talk with him about this, and have told him we ought to have a qualifying period of command, as the Navy has."

In October, Rawlinson had the interest of being in the House to witness the fall of Mr. MacDonald's administration and of watching the results of the consequent general election. On November 7 he sailed for Marseilles: "a stone heavier than when I left Bombay, and absolutely fresh and fit."

Rawlinson's last months in India were as full as ever of varied activities, but he had now no problems of major importance affecting the army to settle, save an increase of pay for British officers in India and the constant demand from the Assembly for more rapid progress in "Indianization."

"We had an important Council on December 17, convened to settle the Pay scheme. I had discovered that the cut of 5½ per cent. which had been applied at home, on account of the fall of the cost of living, had also been applied to the basic rate in the scheme which Shea[1] had prepared. Of course, it is quite unjust to apply a fall in the cost of living at home to India, where the expenses of the British officer are, if anything, increasing; but it meant a total increase of 18 lakhs in the military budget, and I had a struggle to get it through. However, the Secretary of State played up like a man, and I managed to get the Viceroy round to my side. With the help of these powerful friends I got the scheme through Council, and it is more than probable that we shall be able to announce on January 1 that we have a real New Year's gift for the married officers of the army. It means an increase of from 50 to 60 lakhs in the military budget, so it is something of an achievement. I was able to make a great point of the fact that unless we can make service in India financially attractive, as it used to be before the War, we shall never get the best type of officer to come out."

[1] Lieutenant-General Sir J. Shea, K.C.B., Adjutant-General.

With this achievement behind him, Rawlinson went off on a visit to the Maharajah of Alwar. "The Rajah is one of the very ablest of the ruling princes of India. His state is run on very up-to-date lines. He told me that he rules a population of 800,000, with a revenue of 55 lakhs. He has constructed seven large dams within a radius of ten miles of Alwar. His roads, public works, gardens, schools, barracks, and sporting preserves, are all of the very best. I inspected his cavalry and infantry regiments, and their turn-out was very good. He has a really wonderful collection of arms and armour, and a library which contains priceless illuminated manuscripts and books. He takes a really intelligent interest in the antiquities and history of his state, and works hard to obtain the very utmost value for his money, and sees that he gets it. The difficulty, of course, is that it is very much a one-man show. He is absolute boss of every department of his state, and everyone trembles at his word. That is, of course, the difficulty in most of the well-run states; and I suppose Simla is afraid of giving up such control as it has, in case a good ruler may be succeeded by a bad. Personally, I don't much believe in control from Simla, at least in the internal affairs of states, but I see the difficulty. The solution is to help the ruling princes to decentralize by getting them good ministers, who are not so hard to find as they used to be."

January, 1925, was a busy month. There was a large staff ride for the principal commanders and their staffs, followed by important manœuvres, to which Rawlinson took particular care to invite a number of members of the Legislative Assembly, and to see that they were shown everything of interest. In February he wrote his swan-song on the army in India: "My visit home is already bearing fruit. There was some delay in announcing the increase in pay, but it is out at last. Despite it, I have got the military budget down to 56·25 crores, which is a pretty handsome reduction from the 82 crores of 1921. I think that I can fairly claim that this immense economy has been very largely due to my administration of the army. The British garrison of India has been reduced from 75,367 to 57,080, and the Indian army from 159,000 to 140,000, a

total reduction of 37,000 men. But what is still more satisfactory is that these reductions and economies have been brought about in combination with a great increase in efficiency. The army in India is better trained and better equipped for its possible tasks than it has ever been. The recent manœuvres were a demonstration of that to everyone. I have got a first-class team, round men in round holes, and I don't believe that Army Head-quarters has ever been better manned than it is to-day. Skeen is a capital Chief of the Staff, full of knowledge and keenness, with a complete understanding of practical affairs. He and Cory[1] ran the arrangements for the manœuvres splendidly; and I am particularly grateful to Shea, who is an excellent Adjutant-General, for his help in getting the revised pay scheme through. With Stuart-Wortley as Quartermaster-General, and Atkinson as Master-General of Supply, we have got, for the first time, a really business-like system of military administration, and the economies combined with efficiency which they will produce are not yet at an end.

"My colleagues in Council were surprised and delighted when they heard from the India Office that the War Office charge for the year will be 72 lakhs less than they had expected; another result of my trip home. I shall be grievously disappointed if our present frontier policy doesn't put a stop to the endless waste of money on frontier expeditions. The Viceroy has promised to come up to Razmak in April, and I think he will be amazed to see what we have done there. Two years ago no one would have dared to suggest sending the Viceroy into the middle of Waziristan. The Khyber is becoming a resort for tourists, and at last we are in sight of an intelligently planned and permanent pacification of the frontier. This will be of supreme importance if we have to deal with Russian intrigues in Afghanistan. Altogether, I feel that my work here is done. I should like to succeed Cavan when he goes in September, and to come home by New Zealand, Canada and Australia, so as to get my ideas for a real Imperial General Staff in order. If they do not give it me, I shall resign in September, as I don't feel that I can do any more good out here. The army in India

[1] Major-General Sir G. Cory, K.C.B., Deputy Chief of the General Staff.

is all right, and will continue to be all right, if the Indian politicians can be persuaded to be sensible about Indianization. It is the uncertainty about that which keeps our best young men from coming out. As I told the Assembly in a speech which I took a great deal of trouble about,[1] India won't be able to defend herself without us for many, many years to come; I put the minimum period at two generations. The Indian politicians are fond of talking about what Japan has done; but Japan is a homogeneous and intensely patriotic nation, and India is neither homogeneous, nor a nation. It is a continent, with more varied races than are to be found in Europe. The politicians get angry when I tell them that; but it is true, and the sooner they understand it is true the better it will be for India. When India has got rid of her racial feuds, her religious animosities and her Eastern prejudices, and is inspired by one dominating patriotism, she can begin to think of defending herself. But when will that be?"

On his 61st birthday Rawlinson played back in his "Snowdon" team, which won the lower handicap tournament at Delhi; and one of the very last functions which he attended was the final of the Inter-Regimental polo tournament. "It was as good polo as I have seen, the P.A.V.O.s won by 9 goals to 8 against the Central India Horse. Polo in the army out here has improved tremendously in the last four years, and I take some credit for that. The teams seemed to think I deserved it, for they gave me a tremendous reception. I should like to see an Indian Army team take on the Yanks, and I believe, if we could raise enough money for ponies, it would win. Polo out here is played in the right spirit and polo at home isn't—at least not in London."

The last entry in his diary runs:—"I went to Dehra Dun to play cricket for Patiala against the boys. They look splendid and seem very happy and contented, and the new buildings are getting on well. I greatly enjoyed my visit and made 21 runs, not having had a bat in my hands for thirty years."

Very soon after his return from Dehra Dun to Delhi, Rawlinson was taken ill. He was moved to the Hindu

[1] This speech is given in Appendix I.

Rao Hospital on March 24, but failed to rally from an operation, and passed away in the early hours of March 28. His sudden death, when he had appeared to be in full vigour of mind and body, came as a great shock to his many friends at home and abroad, and to the whole army in India. It seemed strangely ironical that the first Commander-in-Chief to die in office should have been one who had given evidence of a physical activity such as none of his predecessors had approached. If his task in India had been completed, there was a general appreciation that there awaited him other tasks which, with a mind broadened by experience and matured by responsibility, he would have undertaken with advantage to the State. So to the sense of loss of a tried friend and of a beloved chief there was joined the poignant regret that a life still pregnant of good had been prematurely cut short. Telegrams of sympathy poured in from the King and Queen, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, from governors, from ruling princes, from the Cabinet and from old comrades.

Lady Rawlinson had decided that her husband's body should be brought home and buried in the churchyard near his mother's house at Trent. On March 30 the historic church outside the Kashmir Gate was crowded to the doors by a congregation headed by the Viceroy, assembled to speed him all honour on his last journey. Thence his body was borne with due military pomp to Bombay, to be embarked upon the troopship *Assaye* and to be received in a like manner four weeks later at Portsmouth. On April 30 the capital of the Empire paid its tribute at St. Margaret's, Westminster, where, appropriately enough, Lord Reading, who had taken advantage of the new act to come home to consult the Government, arrived just in time to represent in person the Government of India, which Rawlinson had served so well. From St. Margaret's, the body, accompanied by a general's escort and followed by a long train of those most distinguished in the service of the Empire, was borne over Westminster Bridge to Waterloo, whence it was taken to Trent and laid to rest in the presence of those who knew best what they had lost of friendship and their country of service.

APPENDIX I

Lord Rawlinson's Last Speech in the Legislative Assembly, Reviewing His Military Policy. March 4, 1925.

Sir, it is usual for the Commander-in-Chief to take part in this Budget discussion and the House has been sufficiently considerate to listen to me in past years with some attention. But this is the last occasion on which I shall address this House in reference to the Budget, and I am going to ask them to bear with me a little if I make somewhat further claims upon their time and if I deal as briefly as I can, not only with the military expenditure, but also to a certain extent with the financial problems that we have before us. The last two speakers have made certain references and criticisms, most of which will be dealt with at a later stage of this debate by Mr. Burden and by the Finance Member. But there is one point raised by Colonel Crawford to which I think I ought to refer, myself, and that is the problem of the North-West Frontier. He asks definitely whether the Government policy ought not and should not be to advance our administered area up to the Durand line. Well, I think I shall not be accused of divulging secrets if I admit that that is the policy which we should all like to adopt. But I wonder whether Colonel Crawford realizes what that would cost us. I think everybody admits that that is the only really satisfactory and final solution of this problem. But its cost is really excessive. At a time when we are trying to reduce our military Budget, I think the only reason for not engaging in this policy is that it would add many crores of rupees to what has already been spent upon that frontier, and that, therefore, the cost is prohibitive.

Now, I would draw attention, if I may, to the budget figures for the last five years. You have seen in the explanatory memorandum that is before you that a reduction has been made in military expenditure during the course of the last five years, from 87 crores down to 56 crores, a reduction of more than 30 crores, a reduction by more than one-third of the total military expenditure. I do not pretend to claim full credit myself for that reduction, but I should like to point out to Honourable Members that it is a very material reduction. I admit that the main cause of it has been the passage from a period when the aftermath of the wars with Afghanistan and in Waziristan was

costing heavily to a period such as we have at present, which I think I can describe as normality. Further details in connection with this reduction have already been given you by the Finance Member, but I contend that it would not have been achieved without the constant and rigid system of economy, in which I, as Commander-in-Chief, have had, at least, a very influential voice. Another important factor that has greatly assisted us has been unquestionably the results of the Inchcape Retrenchment Committee. They have been carried out almost in their entirety, and the only item which still remains to be put into force is the third cavalry regiment, which has yet to be taken off the Indian budget. Notice has been given to the War Office that that regiment will return to England in the next trooping season, and it will cease after that to be paid for by India. There have been certain reductions also in the Aden garrison. The disbandment of the Yemen battalion, and the reduction of a mounted battery, has no doubt helped economy, but that is the sum total of reduction in personnel which was recommended by the Inchcape Committee, and I, for my part, during my term of office cannot look to any further reduction in the combatant branches of the army. I do not mean to say that in certain other directions I do not see that further economies are possible. I have already in mind several directions in which money can be saved. But I think the House will acknowledge that it is satisfactory that at the present time, notwithstanding the fact of the whole of the Inchcape Committee recommendations including troops not having been carried into effect, we should here and now have reduced the Budget 75 lakhs below that which the Inchcape Committee recommended as the first step, namely, Rs. 57 crores. We are now down to Rs. 56¼ crores. Not only has this been possible, but we have included in the present figure a sum of Rs. 170 lakhs for the remainder of the surplus officers, which, being a non-recurring item, will not appear in the next year's Budget. Another factor that has helped us has undoubtedly been the exchange, which has been more favourable, on the details of which the Honourable the Finance Member has already more than once read you a lecture. Included also in this figure of 56¼ crores is the Revised Pay Scheme, which has been on the *tapis* for some considerable time, which, during the last few days, has been approved by the Secretary of State, and which will be published in detail on Saturday next. Furthermore, we have been able to include in this figure certain concessions to the garrison in Waziristan, concerning which questions in this House have been asked more than once, which I think is only a just tribute to the hardships which officers and men have to undergo serving upon the frontier in the neighbourhood of Razmak. Concurrently with these reductions, it has been my duty, as Commander-in-Chief, to carry through the reconstruction of the

army. Honourable Members seldom have opportunities of seeing this side of the military machine, but I was glad to have been able this year to do something in the way of showing them the manœuvres and the review here at Delhi in January last. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the House for the Resolution that they passed some six weeks ago expressing their gratification at the arrangements that had been made for them to witness those operations. I conveyed that to my subordinate officers, who were very much pleased. It has been no easy task to ensure the progress in organization, training and instruction of the army, concurrently with a drastic programme of economy. It has demanded a very careful handling on my part, and I candidly confess that if I had not had the experience of the Great War behind me, which enabled me to discriminate between what was essential and what was not, I should have found it an impossible task. I think the result, in so far as the efficiency of the army is concerned to-day, must be considered satisfactory; for, not only has the fighting efficiency of the units greatly improved during the last four years, but it has been found possible to provide them with the latest equipment in the shape of long-range guns, howitzers, armoured cars, tanks and automatic weapons of all kinds. Moreover, with so many splendid officers now serving in the army, who possess experience of the Great War, it has been a congenial and comparatively easy task for me to ensure that the lessons of that war have been taken to heart and correctly applied to the units and formations of our present army. I cannot speak too highly of the keenness and proficiency of all ranks, and when I lay down my seals of office my greatest regret will be the severing of my connection with such a magnificent body of officers, non-commissioned officers and men. For, after 40 years' experience in the army, I have no hesitation in saying that, so far as that portion of the army is concerned which is now in India, it has never been better commanded and staffed, but I must eliminate from this eulogy, of course, the personality of the Commander-in-Chief.

To some extent the Budget, as well as the training of the army, has been interfered with by active operations, such as the Moplah rebellion, the war in Waziristan, and the many occasions on which it has been necessary to call out the military in aid of the civil power. But, happily, these regrettable interruptions to our normal progress have passed into history, and we all hope that they will not recur.

It is well, perhaps, that I should say a few words on Waziristan. You will, no doubt, have noticed that there is again in this year's Budget no special grant for this purpose. The reason is that the policy in that country of the occupation of Razmak, and the construction of roads, has undoubtedly had the effect of greatly improving the situation, and, though I do not pretend that the Mahsuds have been pacified for

all time, we are now in a far better position than previously to maintain a reasonable standard of law and order in that turbulent country. The construction of the buildings at Razmak and on the lines of communication should be completed before the end of the coming summer, while the damage done to the roads, consequent on the abnormal rainfall last year, has been repaired. I am bound to admit, however, that various forms of *budmashie*[1] are still practised by the Mahsuds, and that kidnapping in a lesser degree still prevails; but, at the same time, we have been able to release these kidnapped prisoners more rapidly than in the past, and we hope, as time goes on, the Mahsud will cease troubling.

Generally speaking, the situation on the frontier from Chitral to Baluchistan is satisfactory, though there are elements of danger always present in that turbulent area which require constant attention, for one never knows when they may not develop. Similarly, our relations with Afghanistan may be said to be normal, notwithstanding the fact that Soviet machinations and propaganda have recently exhibited some signs of activity. These small clouds on the horizon need not, however, give us cause for any serious or undue anxiety unless they develop into cloudy weather; but it would be foolish to shut our eyes to the implications of a *rapprochement* which is undoubtedly taking place between Soviet Russia and China, particularly at a time when China is in a state of chaotic upheaval and when Russian policy in Central Asia is developing on somewhat new lines.

I will pass now to certain matters connected with the army administration which will be of interest, I think, to this House. It would not have been possible to effect the reconstruction of the army unless the higher organization and control which was initiated by my predecessor, and which is known as the Four-Command Scheme, had been maintained and developed. Under this scheme the division of India into four Commands has enabled us to carry out a system of decentralization, which has not only relieved the head-quarters of the Army of much of the work of detail by which it was at one time overwhelmed; but it has placed the responsibility for minor matters of administration on the shoulders of the man on the spot, and thus produced much saving of time and money. I will not take up the time of the House by referring in further detail to this administration, for further particulars are available in the book which I caused to be published to this House last year, entitled "The Evolution of the Army in India." Honourable Members can make reference to that book whenever they want to, and I hope that quite a large proportion have already read it. This brings me to the results which improved administration has had, and is having, on the officers and men of the Army. As the House is aware, I have always placed education in the forefront of the military pro-

[1] Outrage.

gramme. Modern military operations have become so technical that education has greatly increased in importance. The old regime, when the rank and file of an army were designated as food for powder, has passed away never to return. For the modern battle we want men of education who can get the maximum value out of the scientific weapons with which they are provided, and it is for this reason that the training establishments and schools claim so large a place in our military budget. I know it is not everybody that admits that this is necessary. We claim, however, that when we take in a raw recruit, for his 7 to 10 or more years' service, we train and educate him and return him to civil life an improved citizen with a practical education and knowledge of many matters which he would never have had an opportunity of learning except in the army; and I claim, further, that the army is fulfilling a great purpose in raising the general standard of ideals of quite a considerable portion of the inhabitants of this country. Nothing that I can say can adequately express my admiration for, and trust in, the splendid type of Indian we now have in our Indian regiments, especially amongst the Indian officers of all castes and of all religions. One of my Army Commanders, in writing to me the other day, expressed his surprise and gratification at the immense improvement that has taken place during the last two years in the regiments and battalions of the Indian Army. This is highly satisfactory, and I am confident that yet greater improvement will be made under the splendid stamp of British officer which we now have in our units.

I doubt if the House realizes what has been done during the last few years to improve the pay, the pensions, and the general welfare of the Indian soldier; consequently largely on the recommendations of the Esher Committee which sat in 1920. Formerly, an unpleasant comparison used to be drawn between the pay of the soldier and the wages of the daily labourer in civil life. There is no room for such comparisons now. The Indian soldier is well-paid, well-fed and, in most cases, well-housed; but the barrack programme is by no means yet complete, and it will not be finished for at least another four or five years. But it is not only in respect of his pay and accommodation that improvement has taken place. The introduction of the Indian Station Hospital, on the same lines as the British Station Hospital, has provided him with far better medical care, and the result is abundantly clear in the improvement of the general health of the army. It was suggested by one Honourable Member that, in the amalgamation of the Indian Station Hospital and the British Station Hospital, an economy could be effected in the overhead charges. Without having gone deeply into the question, I should say that the great objection will be difficulty of accommodation. At present both hospitals are suitably and well housed in most cantonments in separate buildings often distant

from one another. To combine these into one building would involve considerably more expenditure on barracks, and I very much doubt if you are going to get any great economy in overhead charges even when you have a combined hospital. The Indian Soldiers' Board and its subsidiary organizations cater for the soldier's dependants whilst he is serving, and assist him to re-establish himself in civil life when he leaves the Army. Some time ago I received from the Expeditionary Force Canteen Profits Fund in England a sum of Rs. 38 lakhs, to be devoted to furnishing Indian units with healthy outdoor and indoor recreation. The interest on this money is distributed to Indian units annually and, as you may imagine, is very very much appreciated by them. Then there are the India and Burma Military Relief Fund and the Silver Wedding Fund, which came into existence as a consequence of the war, and which devote large sums to the relief of distress amongst the personnel of the Indian Army and the education of the children of Indian soldiers who fought in the war.

It will, therefore, be evident that the conditions of the Indian soldier have been greatly improved and developed during the last few years. The reductions in the Budget, and the improvement in the conditions of the Indian soldier, could only have been carried into effect with the whole-hearted assistance, advice and co-operation of my friend the Finance Member, who has at all times been only too ready to furnish me with his valuable advice and co-operation. With his help, also, a system of cost accounting has been introduced on commercial lines, which enables us to test the efficiency with which any establishment or unit is run. That, as I observe, has been criticized by one Honourable Member in this morning's debate. I have had some little doubts as to whether the cost accounting system is really a paying concern. But, on the whole, and I do not wish to be taken as giving my considered opinion, I think that it is doing useful and satisfactory work. Whether it has come to stay permanently, or not, remains to be seen. We have not yet had sufficient experience to say. The creation of the department of the Master-General of Supply has removed some of the services which were formerly overwhelming the Quartermaster-General and merged them into a separate department under its own control. Working in conjunction with the Indian Stores Department, we now procure what we require for the Army at the lowest price compatible with the adequate supply of the efficient article; and up to the present I have every reason to be thoroughly satisfied with the working of this new Department of Army Head-quarters. It has fulfilled a most useful purpose and has not only effected considerable economies, but has placed the reserves and the producing machinery of the country on a thoroughly satisfactory basis, as well as developing Indian industries in this country for the supply of articles which the

Army requires and reducing as far as possible those that are imported from overseas.

Now, I have been asked more than once, and one Honourable Member speaking this morning was anxious to know, whether we were receiving full value for our money—whether our insurance was adequate. I can only liken this question to that of any man who insures his house. You do not know whether your house is adequately insured until that house is burnt down and you see whether the money which you get from the insurance company is sufficient to build another. Well, it is exactly the same with military expenditure. You cannot tell whether the insurance is sufficient until you have put it to the real test of war, and until you have won a campaign against your enemy. But this I can say, that if we look, firstly, on the improved efficiency of the Army during the last two or three or four years and, on the other hand, at the reduction that we have made in military expenditure, that you are getting better value for your money to-day than you did two, three or four years ago.

Now, Sir, I feel that I have already encroached too much upon the time of the House. But there is one question to which I think I ought to refer before I sit down. It is a subject which I know is very close to the hearts of my Honourable friends here. It is of first importance, and it is, further, one which I think, in my position as Commander-in-Chief, I ought to refer to before I sit down. We have already, on several occasions, discussed portions of it across the floor of this House, but, as this is the last occasion upon which I shall address you, I feel it is my duty to set forth my considered opinion on this vexed question of Indianization; of the creation of a national army which will make India self-supporting in matters of defence. I may say that ever since I arrived in India as Commander-in-Chief this question has been engaging my most earnest attention, and I have examined it in all its aspects and from every point of view. The conclusions at which I have arrived are, I know, at variance with the expressed views of many Honourable Members in this House, and I doubt if anything that I may say now will induce them to modify their opinion. But that is no reason why I should not be perfectly frank with this Assembly and give them my opinion for what it is worth. After all, it is only an opinion, though it is formed by one who has had some experience of what an army ought to be, and has devoted much time and study to this most vitally important question. One of the first difficulties with which we are confronted is that it is no simple matter to create a national army in India, because India is not a nation. (*A Voice:* "Question!") And I do not think that any Member of this House can really believe in his heart that India is what we call a nation. That is the difficulty we are confronted with here—the want of

homogeneity in the peoples. There are so many different interests, different religions, different castes, different ambitions, scattered over this immense country, which we want to weld together into one uniform fighting machine. That is our chief difficulty. Honourable Members are anxious that Indianization of the Army should proceed at high speed. I do not think they are quite clear as to whether they would get rid of the whole of the British officers, including the Commander-in-Chief, in the next 5, 10, 20 or 30 years. (*A Voice:* "Why not.") Well, I say you have not made up your mind—or whether they would retain a certain proportion of them for a longer period. I say, I do not think you have made up your minds; some Members say one thing, some another. (*A Voice:* "You do not allow us.") Oh yes, we do. My own view is that you will not be able to do without a large percentage of British officers, and still be in a position to defend India successfully, for many many years to come. (*A Voice:* "How many?") I leave you to guess. In the meantime we must do all we can to give to young Indians the best possible chance of becoming efficient officers, and taking up the army as a career. I attach more importance to quality than to quantity, for I feel that every Indian Cadet, who now enters the Dehra Dun College or Sandhurst, who fails to make good as an officer, is going to increase the difficulty which we must eventually overcome when the eight units now in process of Indianization come to be tested in the stern school of war. It is for this reason that I have attacked the problem at its foundations and devoted paramount attention to the education of Cadets and the increase of Indians at Sandhurst. The Dehra Dun College is admirably fulfilling expectations, but it requires to be increased in order to supply a larger number of Cadets for Sandhurst, and this will be done at no very distant date. The creation of the King George's School and the building of the Kitchener College will greatly assist the education of the sons of serving and retired soldiers, from which excellent material we shall, I am confident, be able to find a proportion of our future officers imbued with the martial spirit and accustomed to habits of discipline and hardship which are essential requirements of the officer of the present day. The plans for the Kitchener College are already settled. The College will furnish a cheap and comprehensive education for the sons of Indian officers and men of the army. It will deal only with those who intend to make the army their profession, and will be conducted on lines similar to Dehra Dun and analogous to Sandhurst. It is only awaiting the allotment of funds to break ground and to commence the building.

Since I last addressed this House, the report of the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces Committee has been published and is in the hands of Honourable Members. It contains, as you will have observed, several very far-reaching recommendations, especially regarding University

Training Corps, which, if accepted by the Government and the Secretary of State, will have a marked effect on the Indian Army of the future. In a recent debate in this House, I signified my willingness to accept a similiar committee to examine and to report on matters connected with the military education of and the supply of Indians for commissions. The House did not think fit to agree with me, and pressed for wider terms of reference and an increase in the scope of that inquiry, because, no doubt, they clung to the idea that the rate of Indianization could be accelerated by such an inquiry as they envisaged. I think they were wrong, and I am sure they will imperil the success of the eventual scheme if they continue to try and force the pace. So long as I am Commander-in-Chief, I shall resist strenuously any such endeavour, for I know that by so doing you are only courting disaster. If a false step is taken now at this initial stage, it will not merely affect the future efficiency of the Army, but it will seriously compromise the question of constitutional progress which Honourable Members have so much at heart. That is inevitable, and I will not be a party to measures which in future years may be fraught with such vital consequences.

I have constantly advocated that whatever steps we take now to train Indian officers for King's commissions must be done exactly on the same lines as the steps we take to train our British officers. Nothing less efficient will do, and, moreover, it would not be fair to the Indian. Everything will depend on this, the first generation of Indian officers, that we are now creating, and it is imperative that we shall follow the best methods known to us, and give to Indians the same opportunities of education and training which we give to their British comrades. Even if this is done, we are not even then clear of our troubles. As you know, we are now in process of Indianizing eight units in the Army. I find that service in these eight Indianized units is not popular amongst Indian Cadets coming out of Sandhurst, though, so far, I have not had any direct refusals to join them. But it is not a healthy indication, especially at a time when we are doing all we can to encourage Indian boys to take up a military career and to enter Dehra Dun. The relations between the British and Indian officers in the Army are to-day so intimate, so loyal, and so full of trust, confidence and respect, that I am not surprised to find that Indian cadets prefer to serve in units where they will be associated with British officers. It is to this loyal co-operation between the splendid representatives of both races that the efficiency of the Indian Army of to-day is very largely due, and, as far as I am concerned, I will do nothing that can possibly discourage it. We are experimenting with the Indianization of eight units of the Army. The experiment must be carried through. It may succeed, or it may not. That remains to be

seen; but, whatever happens, the experiment must be tried out, and not plucked out by the roots to see how its growth is proceeding.

In conclusion, I can assure the House that I have given this great problem of Indianization my very best attention whilst Commander-in-Chief in India, with all the knowledge and experience that I possess, and with a very sympathetic interest in what I know to be the aspirations of this House. I can assure the House that when I lay down my office, I shall not cease to take a similar interest in this problem, and, if it should be within my power in future years to assist in any way in its solution, you may be assured that I shall not fail to approach it with that same sympathy and understanding, and on the basis that India must have the best, and nothing but the best, in constructing the foundations of her future Army. The problem is so full of conflicting interests, so complicated by racial and religious influences, and so intimately connected with the future political development of India, that it would be dangerous in the highest degree to risk the consequences of a rash or a false step. If this House would regard the problem from a wider aspect, and get away from minor details and racial competition, it would be more likely to win the confidence of those who are responsible for any scheme of Indianization, and with whom the final decision of this vexed question must ultimately and inevitably rest. (Applause.)

APPENDIX II

The Services of General Lord Rawlinson of Trent.

Lieutenant, King's Royal Rifle Corps, 6–2–84.
Aide-de-Camp to Commander-in-Chief in India, 14–2–86 to 31–1–90.
Burmese Expedition, 1886-7. Dispatches, *London Gazette*, 2–9–87.
Captain, King's Royal Rifle Corps, 4–11–91.
Captain, Coldstream Guards, 20–7–92.
Nile Expedition, 1897–98.
Employed as D.A.A.G. Battles of Atbara and Khartoum. Dispatches, *London Gazette*, 30–9–98.
Egyptian medal and 2 clasps.
Queen's medal and clasp.
Major, Coldstream Guards, 25–1–99.
Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel, 26–1–99.
South African War, 1899–1902.
D.A.A.G., Natal, 16–9–99 to 11–10–99.
A.A.G., South Africa, 12–10–99 to 1–4–02.
In command mobile column, 6–5–01 to 6–6–02. Dispatches, *London Gazette*, 2–12–99; 23–3–00; 8–2–01; 16–4–01; 29–7–02.
Queen's medal and 6 clasps.
King's medal and 2 clasps.
Companion of the Bath.
Brevet-Colonel, 26–6–02.
A.A.G., Head-quarters of Army, 1–4–03 to 4–12–03.
Colonel (substantive), 1–4–03.
Brigadier-General, Commandant Staff College, 5–12–03 to 31–12–06.
Major-General, 10–5–09.
Commander, 3rd Division, 1–6–10 to 31–5–14.
Great War, 1914–1919.
Director Recruiting, War Office, 5–8–14 to 19–9–14.
Commanding 4th Division, 21–9–14 to 4–10–14.

Great War, 1914–1919—(*cont*).

Commanding Fourth Army Corps, 5–10–14 to 21–12–15.

Commanding First and Fourth Armies, 22–12–15 to 18–2–18.

Lieutenant-General, 1–1–16.

General, 1–1–17.

British Representative, Supreme War Council, 19–2–18 to 27–3–18.

Commanding Fourth Army, 28–3–18 to 23–3–19.

G.O.C., North Russia, 4–8–19 to 14–11–19.

Dispatches, *London Gazette*, 17–2–15; 22–6–15; 1–1–16; 15–6–16; 29–12–16; 4–1–17; 19–6–17; 11–12–17; 20–5–18; 20–12–18; 5–7–19.

Created Baron Rawlinson of Trent.

Received thanks of both Houses of Parliament.

1914 Star and clasp. British War Medal. Victory War Medal.

K.C.B., G.C.B., K.C.V.O., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G.

American Distinguished Service Medal.

Order of Leopold, 2nd Class.

Belgian War Cross.

Legion of Honour, 2nd Class.

French War Cross.

Order of St. George, 4th Class.

Obilitch Gold Medal.

G.O.C.-in-C., Aldershot, 15–11–19 to 20–11–20.

Aide-de-Camp General to the King, 31–7–19 to 30–7–23.

Commander-in-Chief, India, 21–11–20 to 28–3–25.

G.C.S.I., 1924.

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